# MSDI Russia DA



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### Shell

#### NATO is not encircling Russia now

Nato, 1-27-2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/115204.htm, "NATO-Russia: setting the record straight ," NATO (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Myth 4: NATO is encircling and trying to contain Russia

Fact: NATO is a defensive alliance, whose purpose is to protect our member states. Our exercises and military deployments are not directed against Russia – or any other country.

This myth also ignores geography. Only 6% of Russia's land borders touch NATO countries. Russia has land borders with 14 countries. Only five of them are NATO members.

Outside NATO territory, the Alliance only has a military presence in Kosovo and Iraq. The KFOR peacekeeping mission is carried out with a United Nations Security Council mandate.

NATO's non-combat mission in Iraq contributes to the fight against terrorism and is carried out at the request of the Iraqi government, with full respect for Iraq's sovereignty. In contrast, Russia has military bases and soldiers in three countries – Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine – without the consent of their governments. Russia also has amassed over 100,000 troops on Ukraine's border and is threatening to invade Ukraine.

#### Doing plan through NATO instead of EU provokes Putin

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Historian Timothy Snyder has pointed out the “politics of eternity”, or “the belief in an unchanging historical essence”. (19) Other Russia observers pinpoint how Putin tries to capitalise not only on history, but also on identity politics with Slavic and Orthodox core of the region populations, and revival of Russian nationalism. Jeffery Mankoff of the Centre for Strategic and International Studies (CSIS) in Washington recalls that “throughout Putin’s time in office, Moscow has pursued a policy toward Ukraine and Belarus predicated on the assumption that their respective national identities are artificial—and therefore fragile. Putin’s arguments about foreign enemies promoting Ukrainian (and, in a more diffuse way, Belarusian) identity as part of a geopolitical struggle against Russia echo the way many of his predecessors refused to accept the agency of ordinary people seeking autonomy from tsarist or Soviet domination.” (20)

These are the layers of Putin’s narratives as he produces and defends his principles of ‘justice’, ‘legitimacy’, ‘truth’ and ‘worldview’ within his own constructivist nuances. However, his rather static interpretation of history seems to collide with the West’s dynamic interpretation, or history dynamics, and the will to Westernisation and Europeanisation, which most of the fifteen former Soviet republics have pursued in the last three decades. Ukraine has, in the midst of a ferocious confrontation with Russian troops, maintained strong hopes it would get rapid admission into the European Union to help ease up Ukraine’s geopolitical vulnerability. As Mankoff put it, “Russian determination to bring Ukraine back into the fold despite the enormous economic price it is paying—not to mention the prospect of a grinding, bloody conflict that it could well lose—suggests that the current crisis goes beyond the question of Ukraine’s relationship with NATO.” (21)

In a joint news conference with visiting European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen in Kyiv on 11 June 2022, Ukranian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy stated, “All of Europe is a target for Russia, and Ukraine is just the first stage in this aggression… This is why a positive EU response to the Ukrainian application for membership can be a positive answer to the question of whether the European project has a future at all.” (22) Von der Leyen told him in candid language, “you have done a lot in strengthening the rule of law, but there is still a need for reforms to be implemented, to fight corruption, for example.” Still, EU leaders have accepted Ukraine’s candidacy.

Meanwhile, Putin made a rather surprising statement about Ukraine’s leaning towards Brussels during the St. Petersburg International Economic Forum on 17 June 2022: "We have nothing against it. It's their sovereign decision to join economic unions or not... It's their business, the business of the Ukrainian people." Such a soft-tone toward Ukraine’s candidacy for the EU membership does not alter Putin’s devotion to his own history and rigid defiance of the NATO’s presence in eastern Europe. The variability of Putin’s tactics vis-à-vis Ukraine’s aspirations toward the EU and the NATO and counter tactics of the re-aligned West’s call for a close examination of the decades-long circulating notions of the Cold War, balance of power, new world order, and the fear of what type the next possible war would be.

#### Putin will use Kaliningrad as a weapon – it escalates

Murad Jandali, 6-28-2022 Al-Estiklal Staffwriter https://www.alestiklal.net/en/view/14082/will-kaliningrad-ignite-the-spark-of-confrontation-between-nato-and-russia, "Will Kaliningrad Ignite the Spark of Confrontation Between NATO and Russia?," Al-Estiklal Newspaper (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

In the midst of the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war four months ago, the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad has emerged as a burning hotspot between Russia and the West, after Western reports described it as a dagger in the loin of Europe and a Russian geopolitical weapon to encircle Europe.

However, tensions recently escalated between Russia and NATO after Lithuania imposed restrictions on the transit of goods by land to the Russian exclave of Kaliningrad, in compliance with the implementation of European Union sanctions on Russia, which raised fears that NATO would be drawn into a direct confrontation with Moscow.

In turn, the governor of the Russian exclave, Anton Alikhanov, published a video in which he says that his neighbor Lithuania has cut off 40-50% of basic goods to his province, which caused a wave of panic among its residents and a hysterical demand for supplies.

Observers believe that the reasons that prompted Russia to intervene against Ukraine are not half the reasons that prompted Russia to intervene against Lithuania now, because the issue is dangerous and related to Russian national security, given that Kaliningrad is Russia's most important strategic location in the Baltics and Putin's arm in the face of Europe.

## UQ

### NATO Not Encircling now

#### NATO is weakening now post Ukraine – plan uniquely restores dominance

Graham E. Fuller, 6-19-2022, former Vice Chair of the National Intelligence Council at CIA with responsibility for global intelligence estimates https://grahamefuller.com/some-hard-thoughts-about-post-ukraine/, "Some hard thoughts about post Ukraine," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Contrary to Washington’s triumphalist pronouncements, Russia is winning the war, Ukraine has lost the war. Any longer-term damage to Russia is open to debate.

American sanctions against Russia have turned out to be far more devastating to Europe than to Russia. The global economy has slowed and many developing nations face serious food shortages and risk of broad starvation.

There are already deep cracks in the European façade of so-called “NATO unity.” Western Europe will increasingly rue the day that it blindly followed the American Pied Piper to war against Russia. Indeed, this is not a Ukrainian-Russian war but an American-Russian war fought by proxy to the last Ukrainian.

Contrary to optimistic declarations, NATO may in fact ultimately emerge weakened. Western Europeans will think long and hard about the wisdom and deep costs of provoking deeper long term confrontations with Russia or other “competitors”of the US.

Europe will sooner or later return to the purchase of inexpensive Russian energy. Russia lies on the doorstep and a natural economic relationship with Russia will possess overwhelming logic in the end.

### Senate checks the Thumpers

#### Senate checks the expansion thumpers

David Auerswald, 5-17-2022, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/new-atlanticist/how-the-us-senate-could-slow-down-sweden-and-finlands-nato-future/, "How the US Senate could slow down Sweden and Finland’s NATO future," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

With the announcements that Finland and Sweden will apply for NATO membership, attention now turns to the existing members of the Alliance. Adding new members requires amending NATO’s founding treaty, which then needs to be ratified by each of its thirty members. Proponents within the Alliance—to say nothing of the two aspirant countries—will want that process to happen as fast as possible. The longer it drags on, the more opportunities exist for Russia to derail the expansion process by manipulating public opinion, engaging in petro-coercion, or increasing its military threats.

But could the US Senate, which must provide its advice and consent for any new or amended treaty, imperil the process?

If history is any guide, the Senate will overwhelmingly support adding Finland and Sweden to NATO (certainly by more than the two-thirds required by the Constitution). That was the case in 1998, when senators supported membership for the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland by an 80-19 vote; in 2003, when senators unanimously welcomed Bulgaria, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Romania, Slovakia, and Slovenia by a 96-0 vote; in 2008, when senators admitted Albania and Croatia by voice vote; and in 2017 and 2019, when it approved Montenegro and Northern Macedonia, respectively, to join the Alliance with only two dissenting votes each time.

The more interesting question is how long it will take the Senate to provide its advice and consent—and here the record does not bode well. The amended treaty is likely to be signed in the next few weeks, perhaps even before the NATO Summit at the end of June. That means the Senate, which is typically in recess during August, would need to hold hearings and vote in June and July, September and October, or wait until a lame duck session after the midterm elections. The fastest enlargement process, in 2003, took a month and a half from the NATO signing ceremony to final Senate passage. Other rounds took much longer: The 1998 round took more than four months, while the 2017 and 2019 enlargements took more than ten and eight months, respectively. The war in Ukraine could certainly speed up the process, but do not be surprised if the Senate process drags into the fall.

Another question is whether senators will condition their votes on changes in administration policy. In 1997, for example, Republican Sen. Jesse Helms withheld support for the Chemical Weapons Convention until the Clinton administration agreed to abolish the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency and the US Information Agency.

Senators can also use more subtle means to change policy. In providing treaty advice and consent, senators pass what is called a ratification document that affirms that Washington will abide by the treaty’s terms. Senators can add all sorts of reservations, understandings, and conditions to that document. For example, senators have specified that arms-control treaties do not limit US missile-defense capabilities.

#### No SQ escalation – only increasing the threat risks it

IDN, 6-23-2022, InDepthNews offers news analyses and viewpoints on topics that impact the world and its peoples. IDN-InDepthNews serves as flagship of the International Press Syndicate Group, partner of the Global Cooperation Council. https://www.eurasiareview.com/23062022-theres-no-need-for-war-with-russia-oped/, "There’s No Need For War With Russia – OpEd," Eurasia Review (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Conflicts have a history of spinning out of control. Trotsky, the one-time close comrade of Lenin, reportedly said, “You may not be interested in war, but war is interested in you”. The overwhelming majority of Ukrainians were not interested in war until President Volodymyr Zelensky took his counterproductive stance on NATO membership and President Vladimir Putin subsequently launched his invasion and united most of Ukraine’s people against him.

Some observers talk about the war between the West and Russia. Although this could not happen as long as Angela Merkel is around in Germany (she retains a great deal of influence), France remains French and President Joe Biden stays cool, it may be a “damned close-run thing” (as the Duke of Wellington was supposed to have said after the victory over Napoleon at the battle of Waterloo).

Putin, I believe, is not interested in territorial aggrandisement but he is interested in Russia not being threatened. Biden knows that many of the US’s top political science and history professors share this interpretation and sympathise with Russia’s predicament, even as they oppose Putin’s use of force. (In a public letter written to President Bill Clinton, these top professors advised him not to expand NATO.) Biden and other NATO leaders have to bite on this truth.

### Rebalancing now

#### Post-Ukraine will lead to US rebalancing

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

In contrast, the Biden administration’s national defence strategy maintains the existence of threats of both Russia and China exist. While delivering the revised classified strategy to Congress on 28 March 2022, the Pentagon pointed out in a public statement that Russia was posing ‘acute threats’, with China remaining “our most consequential strategic competitor and the pacing challenge.” (30) Secretary of State Anthony Blinken asserts that “China is the only country with both the intent to reshape the international order and, increasingly, the economic, diplomatic, military, and technological power to do it. Beijing’s vision would move us away from the universal values that have sustained so much of the world’s progress over the past 75 years.” (31) He is sceptical about a possible rapprochement, but also determined to pursue further containment of China. He underscores the United States “can’t rely on Beijing to change its trajectory. So, we will shape the strategic environment around Beijing to advance our vision for an open and inclusive international system.” (32)

Blinken and other U.S. officials’ discourse seems to capitalise on the original framework of containment designed by George Kennan in his anonymous essay, “X-Article”, formally titled, "The Sources of Soviet Conduct", published in Foreign Affairs in July 1947. He called for countering “Soviet pressure against the free institutions of the Western world” through the “adroit and vigilant application of counter-force at a series of constantly shifting geographical and political points, corresponding to the shifts and maneuvers of Soviet policy.” There is noticeable return to the containment strategy in Washington in dealing with China and Russia. Still, the White House has not shifted away from its priority of maintaining a favourable balance of power in the Indo-Pacific region. Some analysts wonder whether these rivalries can be “managed in Cold War 2.0 or if it will be more dangerous than its forerunner.” (33)

Now, containment is called back again to serve a double-shift task in Biden’s foreign policy and the preservation of the United States’ leadership of the West and standing in world politics. The Ukraine war could be a good opportunity for adjusting and rebalancing Biden’s strategic priorities in Indo-Pacific, Europe, the Gulf and the Middle East. Still, the question lingers whether the reproduction of containment is good enough, or strategically sufficient, to give the Biden administration some leverage to outperform two-rival superpowers with is a common goal: the pursuit of undermining U.S. power and influence in the world, maximising their de-dollarisation efforts and endangering the position of the dollar as the reserve currency.

### No Horizontal Escalation unless plan

#### Horizontal escalation unlikely now, could happen if Putin is weakened

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

The risk of horizontal escalation

Though it presents incredibly high risk, escalating the conflict beyond Ukraine’s borders in the near term is an option Putin could consider if his survival is at stake. A direct attack on NATO territory—perhaps through Lithuania to obtain a land corridor to the Kaliningrad exclave and cut off the Baltic States, should Russian forces find more success in Ukraine—is possible. The powerful Kaliningrad garrison, which includes nuclear-tipped Iskander-M and Kalibr systems, could assist. At sea, a desperate Russian Federation might attack and seize commercial shipping in international waters on the Black Sea and in the Baltic. Broadening the conflict to engage outside powers more directly might stop the flow of support and lethal aid to Ukraine, throw NATO into disarray, create openings for sanctions relief, and rally an increasingly disaffected Russian population. If tactical nuclear weapons are postured for use, or employed in desperation, the risks of uncontrolled escalation will become quite real. Such use is not likely, but cannot be ruled out.

Other military options also exist. Belarus has a substantial ground force of four heavy brigades, an airborne brigade, and strong artillery, which remain uncommitted. Putin could, in effect, take over and deploy this force in Ukraine or the Baltics, though its morale appears low. To distract and punish NATO for its support, hybrid operations in the Baltic States using Russian mercenaries, special-operations troops and intelligence paramilitaries from the Federal Security Service (FSB) and the Main Intelligence Directorate (GRU) could seize ethnically Russian parts of NATO territory (for example, in the Narva area in Estonia) and declare independence. While substantial Russian regular forces are not available in strength, this move would provoke frantic diplomatic activity in NATO and the EU, and could provide leverage for negotiations and sanctions relief.

Horizontal escalation in other regions—such as the Arctic, the Mediterranean, and the Far East—is also possible, but would suffer from the same disability: lack of military resources to achieve any decisive result. To date, Russian naval forces are intact and could be employed, but the Russian navy is not a true blue-water maritime force and, apart from nuisance attacks, could not realistically alter strategic outcomes. The same is true of Russian military aviation and space forces. Apart from generating confusion and a degree of misdirection, it is unlikely that these operations could contribute significantly to the success of the campaign in Ukraine, Putin’s principal goal. On the contrary, such operations could bring other military powers into the conflict against Russia, alienate others such as China and India, and change the correlation of forces decisively against Russia.

## Links

### Solidification link – this is a NB for unilateral CP

#### Plan solidifies NATO, creating a double loss situation – CP allows Europe to mediate DA impacts instead of participating as stakeholder – no thumpers because everything pivots on this distinction

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Conclusion: Where will the resolution framework come from?

The current geopolitical impasse between Russia and the NATO will persist in time and complexity. The fluidity of the four political constructs – Cold War, balance of power, new world order and the fifth-sixth-generation war debate – discussed in this paper, is still far away from reaching a minimum rapprochement between the Kremlin and Western powers for the following reasons:

Russia and NATO are not engaged in a zero-sum showdown with one winner and one loser as realpolitik enthusiasts would argue. But, it is an absolute zero-sum where both parties end up losing. Russian and Western economies will struggle and wane over time in an aimless venture of hurting stalemate. Differences of political temporalities between Putin’s revisionist approach to history and the West’s assumption of eternal weakness after the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991. Putin has harkened back to an ahistorical past to justify his decisions in the present. He has weaponised history to solidify his claims over Crimea in 2014 and eastern Ukraine in 2022. He stated, “in territories adjacent to Russia, which I have to note is our historical land, a hostile ‘anti-Russia’ is taking shape,” Putin said in another address ahead of the invasion. “For our country, it is a matter of life and death, a matter of our historical future as a nation.”

The post-Ukraine War dynamics have shown an incomplete subordination of forces and strategies among four global players: Russia, China, the U.S. and the E.U. Russia has gone beyond any other nation to coordinate a comprehensive strategic partnership with China. But, Chinese officials are not keen on siding fully with the Kremlin. They have implied that the ‘no limits’ partnership has a few limits. U.S. National Security Adviser Jake Sullivan at the White House stated he has not seen evidence of China providing military support to Russia. Beijing’s diplomacy seeks to secure its interests in the Indo-Pacific region than drumming up support for Moscow.

The Transatlantic relations between the United States and Europe will pivot around the solidification of the NATO. Biden is enthusiastic about reinforcing NATO-US leadership as well as mending fences with several Europeans governments. During his news conference at the White House with Finish president Sauli Niinistö and Swedish Prime minister Magdalena Andersson mid-May 2022, Biden asserted that “today, there is no question: NATO is relevant, it is effective, and it is more needed now than ever. The indispensable alliance of decades past is still the indispensable alliance for the world we face today and, I would argue, tomorrow as well.”

The eclipse of the liberal left’s discourse and peace theory. What matters now is how the West and Russia can manipulate their hard and sticky power capabilities. Realpolitik enthusiasts feel confident now that political realism is back to explain best world dynamics, and that “great powers compete for power and influence and others adapt as best they can.” (45) However, soft power theorist Joseph Nye considers any realist assertion that “so much for soft power” as a response that “betrays a shallow analysis”. (46) He acknowledges that hard military power has dominated the short-run battle. But, he argues that “the effects of soft power tend to be slow and indirect in international politics. We can see the effects of bombs and bullets right away, whereas the attraction of values and culture may be visible only in the long run.” (47)

Any potential outcome of the Russia-NATO showdown will not emerge out of the wishful political dialectic between the Kremlin and the White House, nor from the calls of UN Secretary-General António Guterres for the enactment of an urgent and immediate humanitarian ceasefire. The long-term transformation of the metaconflict will require a shift of the EU position from stakeholder to mediator between Moscow and Washington.

### Cohesion Link

#### Cohesion is vital to NATO military tactics

Sean Monaghan, 6-28-2022, CSIS visiting fellow with the Europe, Russia, and Eurasia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies in Washington, D.C. https://www.csis.org/analysis/resetting-natos-defense-and-deterrence-sword-and-shield-redux, "Resetting NATO’s Defense and Deterrence: The Sword and the Shield Redux," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Final Word: Political Cohesion and Military Strength

NATO is the world’s largest, most powerful, most successful, and preeminent military alliance of nations. One reason for its longevity is continuous adaptation. The main mechanism for this process has been the alliance’s most important document: its strategic concept. NATO’s new concept will guide its latest evolution as the alliance resets to deal with a situation it has never faced in its history: a full-scale land war in Europe.

Yet resetting NATO’s defense and deterrence posture is not simply a military-strategic matter. It is above all a political one, requiring unity and solidarity. In facing this crucial task, the allies of NATO must recall one of the basic principles from its founding strategic concept, taken from the North Atlantic Treaty itself: “They are resolved to unite their efforts for collective defense and for the preservation of peace and security.” Or, in the words of NATO secretary general Joseph Luns from 1976, which resonate today: “our efforts can only succeed if they are based on political cohesion and on military strength of a scale sufficient to resist military or political pressures. Then we shall be able to face with confidence the constant challenges which we must expect to be our lot over the months and years ahead.”84

### Timing Link

#### Ukraine creates an opening for Biden – plan gives direction – effects will be amplified

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Western governments are not in favour of engaging in direct armed confrontation with Russian forces, while differences within the NATO persist about the best tactics that can fulfil U.S. Secretary of Defence Lloyd Austin’s objective: “We want to see Russia weakened.” Some observers consider his comments “a clear sense of confidence that the strategy is clearly working.” (2) The Ukraine war has been a good opportunity for U.S. President Joe Biden to push for the solidification of the NATO’s raison d’être in terms of protecting Western Europe’s security under the banner of U.S. military and technological leadership. However, it is a challenge for the NATO to consider what can be termed as a double-edge sword plan of action vis-à-vis the prospects of admitting two Nordic state members: “a security that is enhanced by Finland and Sweden; but, an insecurity that is spreading across Eastern Europe.” (3)

A complex metaconflict on the rise

The Ukraine war and the subsequent Russia-NATO showdown have showcased how conflicts may come in different forms and sizes of complexity. This complexity explains “why interventions may have un-anticipated consequences. The intricate inter-relationships of elements within a complex system give rise to multiple chains of dependencies.” (4) The management of the ongoing war has accentuated the interconnectedness between several global political, military and economic systems and related dependencies between states and alliances battling their luck at though geo-economic chessboards. Some academicians have conceived complexity as “a structural condition” of world politics and provides “the ontology behind challenging current research questions.” (5)

### Sanction Link

#### Plan gets framed as a new sanction on Ukraine – drives Putin overreaction

Alexander Korolev, 2-24-2022, U-NSW Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of New South Wales. He is currently completing a book manuscript on the theory of strategic alignments with special reference to the China-Russia alignment. https://iai.tv/articles/only-neutrality-can-save-the-geopolitical-deadlock-auid-2140, "," IAI TV - Changing how the world thinks (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

The western response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine was supposed to help the latter by punishing the former. That strategy isn’t working. Punishing Russia economically is suring up Putin’s position domestically, NATO’s expansion is strengthening the China-Russia alignment, and military assistance to Ukraine without direct NATO involvement is merely protracting the war, with no clear end in sight. Given the geopolitical deadlock, the only viable option would be for the West to broker a neutrality status for Ukraine. It will be a difficult deal, with lots of costly compromises, but at this point it's the only geoplolitical solution available, writes Alexander Korolev.

The West’s response to Russia’s invasion of Ukraine on 24 February 2022 can be broken down into three main prongs. The first one has to do with the imposition of unprecedented economic sanctions to inflict enough punishment on Russia to delegitimise Vladimir Putin’s political regime or make it change its foreign policy calculus and stop the war. The second prong materialized in extensive military assistance to Ukraine to help Kyiv fence off Russia’s aggression by making the costs of the war unacceptable to Moscow. The third prong took the form of a new round of NATO expansion into Finland and Sweden – to contain aggressive Russia more effectively and, according to NATO General Secretary Jens Stoltenberg, demonstrate that NATO’s door remains open regardless of Mr Putin’s preferences and that smaller states have full agency over their foreign policy choices.

The geopolitical implications of this three-prong response emerge as opposite to the intended outcomes. While punishing Russia, it fails to help end the Russia-Ukraine war. Instead, by all evidence, it consolidates Putin’s grip on power and makes him dig in for a long haul in Ukraine.

The more the West uses sanctions to push against Russia and threaten the existing political regime, the more the majority of Russians rally around Putin.

The economic sanctions have failed to have a tangible impact on Russia’s behaviour in Ukraine. Nor did they undermine Putin’s domestic standing. Even smaller states could sustain an enormous amount of economic punishment without populations and elites revolting against the ruler. In Russia, the Western economic sanctions have encountered Russia’s own nationalism that, with the assistance of state propaganda, effectively channels public indignation about economic hardships into anger against the external enemy and the cause of the pain – the West. The more the West uses sanctions to push against Russia and threaten the existing political regime, the more the majority of Russians rally around Putin. According to recent public opinion polls, 76% of Russians trust their president. Moreover, the data reveals that while in December 2021 only 62% of Russians approved of Putin’s job as the President, in May 2022 this figure rose to more than 70%, with 61% noticing increased social unity around the President. This level of support allows Putin to claim to have a public mandate to continue carrying out his “special operation” in Ukraine.

Military assistance to Ukraine, with the West’s simultaneous reluctance to step in and defend Ukraine militarily, also protracts the war. The crisis is plagued by the “geopolitics of asymmetry” – a situation where Russia is willing to pay an enormous price to pursue its geopolitical interests in Ukraine, a price that neither NATO nor EU is willing to even consider. Losing in Ukraine would be a political catastrophe for Putin, which is why the regime will not shy away from the most dramatic solutions to prevail in the conflict. For the US and its allies, in turn, Ukraine is not a priority strategic interest beyond its being a useful strategic bulwark against Russia. According to UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the war in Ukraine “is not a NATO conflict, and will not become one.” In a similar vein, Stoltenberg highlighted that “we are determined to do all we can to support Ukraine. But we have a responsibility to ensure that the war does not escalate beyond Ukraine, and become a conflict between NATO and Russia.” In a situation when Russia is willing to fight and die in Ukraine whereas the EU and the US are not, flooding Ukraine with weapons without tangible security guarantees or attempts to broker a neutrality status for Ukraine does make the war costly for Russia, but it fails to make it shorter, with Ukraine being destroyed in the process.

Putin has managed to create the world he has been warning Russians and Russia’s allies about: the West is indeed fully out to encircle Russia.

Finally, the expansion of NATO into Sweden and Finland has poignantly demonstrated that despite the war, Ukraine remains a third-rank citizen in the West. Sweden and Finland were warmly welcomed by NATO even before they formally applied. Ukraine, in turn, despite all its efforts to join NATO, was designated by Boris Johnson on 6 March 2022 as the country that “had no serious prospects of NATO membership in the near future.” This was echoed, on 11 March 2022, by Josep Borrell, who reflectively admitted with regards to Ukraine’s NATO membership that “it’s a mistake to make promises that you can’t keep.”

The limits of the West’s support of Ukraine are crystal clear to Putin and the rest of the world. Regardless of what Russia does in Ukraine, there will be no NATO membership and no collective security guarantees for Ukraine. Moreover, this round of NATO expansion brings the “enemy” to the gate of Russia and corroborates Putin’s besieged-fortress ideology. Thus, Putin has managed to create the world he has been warning Russians and Russia’s allies about: the West is indeed fully out to encircle Russia. This self-fulfilling prophecy shores up Putin’s rhetoric within Russia and signals to China that the West does pose a danger to Russia and is more interested in harming Russia’s geopolitical interests than helping Ukraine. This recognition strengthens China-Russia alignment which will further buttress Russia’s capacity to carry on in Ukraine.

### Hybrid war link

#### Even if plan isn’t military, it is hybrid war by other means

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Another framework has focused on Conflict Intelligence (CIQ) as “a set of competencies and skills used to manage different types of normative conflicts in diverse or changing situations effectively and constructively”, as illustrated by Peter Coleman, director of the Morton Deutsch International Center for Cooperation and Conflict Resolution at Columbia University. (12) Coleman and his colleagues have identified “two meta-competencies—Conflict Intelligence and Systemic Wisdom—for adaptively managing different kinds of conflicts across contexts, and for transforming entrenched patterns of conflict. These represent two distinct but complementary competencies or modes of conflict engagement, which are associated with distinct types of conflict. The Conflict Intelligence and Systemic Wisdom framework differentiates conflicts according to their levels of complexity, destructiveness, and endurance over time.” (13)

In retrospect, the escalatory mood between the Kremlin, the White House and its European allies has entailed a metaconflict with grandiose magnitude since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine. It has not been a classic confrontation between serviceman and mercenaries, but a sticky war involving legions of financiers, bankers, business executives, hackers, influencers and spin doctors. The notion of war seems to be evolving rapidly and contests most of the legacy of World War II.

There is a significant shift toward “holistic doctrines that can comprehensively explain the multifaceted character of modern war, including the Russian concept of hybrid warfare, the American concept of fourth-generation warfare and the Chinese concept of unrestricted warfare. Permanent change and full-spectrum clashes are structural features of contemporary security environments.” (14) Before delving into the four transformative political constructs of the post-Cold War era, it is important to study first how Russian president Vladimir Putin has solidified his position and precursors of his defence strategy vis-à-vis the NATO.

### Cyber Links

#### Cyber Focus sharpening link

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Russia’s invasion of Ukraine has helped to sharpen the focus on the threat posed by the Kremlin, but it is not the only security challenge confronting NATO. To discern the diversity of allied threat perceptions and how the next Strategic Concept should address them, we studied the security strategies (produced before Russia’s war in Ukraine) from France, Germany, Italy, Poland, the United States, and the United Kingdom to see what the word count in each strategy might say about each country’s perceived greatest threats (e.g. words like China and cyber) as well its priorities (e.g. words like Europe/European and NATO).

Geographical concerns abound with Poland rather focused on Russia, Germany very Europe-centric, Italy biased towards the Mediterranean, and France particularly invested in Africa. France and the United Kingdom made the only mentions of the Arctic among the group. China was of some concern to all these allies, with the United States and France most invested in Indo-Pacific security–which reinforces why France was so bruised following the AUKUS agreement, as the region is a definite priority for Paris. Germany made the most mentions of NATO, alliances, and Europe, and its strategy very much reflects the long-held standard of a Federal Republic nestled at the heart of Europe and multilateral institutions. The challenge with the NATO Strategic Concept will be for drafters to reconcile US interest in the Asia-Pacific region against the more local interests of other allies. What role, if any, does NATO have regarding great-power competition in Asia? How exactly does the Alliance square the circle of requirements from the Artic to the Mediterranean?

The regional divergence was somewhat offset by similar perceptions of the primary challenges with cyber issues featuring across the board. Terrorism and societal resilience to terrorist attacks remains a prominent issue. The rise of authoritarianism and concerns about the strength of democratic societies are shared by many, but such concerns are not mentioned by Poland— not a surprise considering its own democratic backsliding. Nearly all the documents, especially the more recent ones, assert the challenge to the “liberal international order” and call for reinforcement and support for global norms and international law. Nuclear weapons proliferation is a worry for some but not all, and migration featured in the documents of countries that expressed more concern with instability in NATO’s near abroad.

#### Cyber attacks inevitable in the SQ

Paul Gebhard 6-16-2022, nonresident senior fellow in the Scowcroft Center’s Transatlantic Security Initiative and a vice president at the Cohen Group in Washington, DC, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/commentary/trackers-and-data-visualizations/visualizing-the-nato-strategic-concept/, "Visualizing the NATO Strategic Concept: Five ways to look at the Alliance's future," (ermo/sms, Acc:7-2-2022)

It is a common saying among cyber practitioners that there are two types of victims: “those who know that they have been hacked and those who have, but don’t know it yet.” Attribution of an attack through cyberspace requires technical information and the willingness to name names. Attribution can be tricky, though it happens with increasing frequency in hints and outright statements from governments as well as a sea of claims from private sector firms. To establish attribution, analysts might try to determine if the cyberattack looks like—or originated from similar places in cyberspace—as attacks on other targets, if the software program used in the attack shares similarities with others, or even the language and time zone of the program (as simple as that may sound).

While government attribution against other states is more common now than even five years ago, it is still seen as a significant action in part because of the political will necessary to publicly decry offending states. This map identifies the NATO governments that have attributed an incident of cyber espionage and reconnaissance to Russia. As can be seen, the majority of NATO governments have publicly attributed cyber operations targeting sensitive official files and government personnel to Russia in recent years. In particular, the United States, Germany, France, the United Kingdom, Italy, and Poland have all reported breaches, and in some cases a multitude of them. Russia’s continued efforts to spy on the computer networks and classified systems of NATO governments, even when revealed in public, would suggest that the Kremlin is impervious to “naming and shaming” for these activities in cyberspace.

While cyberspace has taken its place firmly with air, land, sea, and space as one of the domains of modern warfare, the ease of connecting digitally across borders, significant role of the private sector, and a host of other factors can make cyberspace a challenging domain to manage. This is especially so when attacks are so common and, seemingly, useful to attackers. Until the United States and its NATO allies either increase the risks or lower the rewards for such attacks, Russia has no incentive to change course.

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### AI + Cyber link

#### Capacity building including AI or cyber enables push back against Russia

Wayne Schroeder , 6-16-2022, nonresident senior fellow in the Scowcroft Center’s Transatlantic Security Initiative and a former US deputy undersecretary of defense for resource planning and management. Atlantic Councilhttps://www.atlanticcouncil.org/commentary/trackers-and-data-visualizations/visualizing-the-nato-strategic-concept/, "Visualizing the NATO Strategic Concept: Five ways to look at the Alliance's future," (ermo/sms, Acc:7-2-2022)

Moscow’s war against Ukraine has altered the European security environment. As allies reorient NATO’s focus back toward collective defense in the Strategic Concept, it is time for the Alliance to get serious about defense spending and move the discussion beyond rhetoric and toward measurable contributions to defense and deterrence. As this graphic indicates, though a number of allies already spend above 2 percent of gross domestic product (GDP) on defense, if all allies were to meet or exceed the pledge (agreed to in 2014), they would have nearly one hundred billion dollars more to invest where it’s needed most: readiness, capabilities, and capacity. Not to mention what Finland and Sweden can bring to the Alliance.

Readiness

Unit and individual readiness should be dramatically increased. Expanded NATO training and exercise programs should integrate advanced command and control, logistics support, and military mobility initiatives.

Capabilities

Technology applications should be accelerated, particularly cyber defense, artificial intelligence, autonomy, precision engagement, power, energy, and logistics.

Capacity

NATO’s enhanced Forward Presence in Poland and the Baltics should be expanded beyond battalion strength, leveraging $1-2 billion of US European Deterrence Initiative funding. Naval operations in the High North, Mediterranean, and Black Sea should be expanded, providing NATO with opportunities to increase maritime presence and awareness.

Numerous current and future allies have renewed the 2 percent pledge and already committed substantial new resources to defense. Yet allies have far more capacity to act, and the Strategic Concept must both reassert this pledge and clearly prioritize for a public audience where these new resources should be spent. With a substantial and focused increase in defense investment, NATO could enhance European defense and deterrence by responding to the increased Russian threat with essential readiness, capability, and capacity upgrades. NATO allies must summon the will to respond to the new security environment Putin has created. Spending at the 2 percent level should be considered a floor, and not a ceiling, as we move toward the new NATO Strategic Concept. At this moment, NATO must lay out a clear level of ambition to realign national defense programs to the actual needs of transatlantic security.

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### 6G war link – AI or cyber

#### Plan is a 6GW tactic

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

A sixth-generation war?

The Russia-NATO metaconflict seems to blend traditional and innovative mechanisms of war and subordination of political economy to realpolitik. The Ukraine war seems to be notorious for the involvement of more modern components. Military experts point out that the Russian version of ‘shock and awe’ includes “airstrikes, drones and hypersonic missiles in order to overwhelm the Ukrainians, as well as threats of nuclear sabre-rattling to deter the direct intervention of NATO.” (37) Meanwhile, the Kremlin positions its economic weaponry to counter Western sanctions. Some Russia observers foresee Russia’s pursuit of “asymmetric means to hit back and impose costs on the West. Cyberattacks, political influence and disinformation campaigns, money laundering and corruption efforts are few of the many tools in its toolbox.” (38)

A new puzzle has emerged regarding whether it is a sixth-generation war if we consider the disparity of weapons: Russia’s hard power and military tools versus the West’s sanctions and other restrictions of political economy. It derives its significance from Russian military strategists’ approach to dividing the world into continental and oceanic “theatres of military action” (teatri voennykh deistvii [TVDs]). Chief of Russia’s General Staff, Army General Valery Gerasimov, explained the role of the military in operations in Syria since September 2015 with an emphasis on the “limited” application of hard power, culminating in articulating this as an emerging “strategy of limited actions”, by waging “non-contact” warfare and employing “high-precision weapons systems”. (39)

The idea of a possible sixth-generation war builds on the differences of the fifth-generation warfare (5GW), which is conducted primarily through non-kinetic-military action, such as social engineering, misinformation, cyberattacks, along with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and fully autonomous systems. The term “fifth-generation warfare”, coined in 2003 by Robert Steele, has been described as a war of "information and perception". (40) However, there is a debate whether fourth-generation wars “had yet to fully materialize”. (41)

### Navy Link

#### Only Sea Supply prevents blockade

Murad Jandali, 6-28-2022 Al-Estiklal Staffwriter https://www.alestiklal.net/en/view/14082/will-kaliningrad-ignite-the-spark-of-confrontation-between-nato-and-russia, "Will Kaliningrad Ignite the Spark of Confrontation Between NATO and Russia?," Al-Estiklal Newspaper (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Kaliningrad is located between Lithuania and Poland, on the southern coast of the Baltic Sea, and the exclave receives many supplies via trains that pass from Lithuania and Belarus.

However, Moscow can still supply it by sea without being subject to EU sanctions.

Amid Western fears that Lithuania might be on Russia's list of targets after Ukraine, the European Union ambassador called on Moscow to solve the problem of crossing to Kaliningrad diplomatically.

In the midst of this tension, German Chancellor Olaf Schulz confirmed, on June 21, 2022, his country's strong support for Lithuania and the Eastern European allies.

On the other hand, the United States stressed to Lithuania, a member of NATO, that any attack on a NATO member would be considered an attack on the entire alliance.

It is noteworthy that one of the main pillars of the NATO alliance is the concept of collective defense, known as Article 5, and this means that if a member is attacked, it is considered an attack on the entire alliance with all members having an obligation to protect each other.

In turn, Lithuanian Foreign Minister Gabrielius Landsbergis said that his country is implementing the sanctions imposed by the EU, noting that the measures that were implemented were taken after consulting with the European Commission and in accordance with its guidelines.

“Russian goods subject to EU sanctions will no longer be allowed to cross Lithuanian territory,” Landsbergis added.

### Strategy Link

#### Humanitarian focus is only way out of Ukraine war

Alexander Korolev, 2-24-2022, U-NSW Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of New South Wales. He is currently completing a book manuscript on the theory of strategic alignments with special reference to the China-Russia alignment. https://iai.tv/articles/only-neutrality-can-save-the-geopolitical-deadlock-auid-2140, "," IAI TV - Changing how the world thinks (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

These are immediate implications of the West’s response to the Ukraine war. In the long run, economic sanctions, support for the Ukrainian military, and NATO expansion might eventually drag Putin down. But the opposite scenario might also be true. The Western unity might fail to sustain the stress-testing of the war. The sanctions are costly for Russia, but so they are for Europe. The European population might grow tired of skyrocketing fuel prices, which undermine the competitiveness of Europe’s industries, and the impending food crisis, which will affect large swathes of the population. A new generation of politicians might come to power and start reconsidering their relations with Russia and NATO. In any scenario, the conflict seems to have passed the point of no return and morphed into a long-term open confrontation between Russia and the West, when both sides are more interested in prevailing in the ongoing Ukraine crisis than in preventing it, which is detrimental for Ukraine as an independent state.

In a geopolitical deadlock like this, the only workable proposal that both Russia and the West could accept without looking like a losing side should have explicit humanitarian grounds – a common denominator for negotiations. In other words, the goal of saving lives in Ukraine should explicitly prevail over the geopolitical logic of weakening Russia. The West should work with Kyiv and Moscow to broker an internationally-guaranteed neutrality status for Ukraine. Such an agreement must go beyond just Moscow and Kyiv and involve multiple stakeholders including the United States, some of its European allies, and also China – a de facto ally of Russia. The key to success is to institutionalise the agreement by making it nested in the existing networks of multilateral security agreements, which will make breaking the agreement by either Russia or Ukraine more difficult.

This is a momentous task for diplomats, and the final arrangement will not be ideal and will involve some difficult decisions. For example, Ukraine will have to reconsider its claims over Crimea. Russia will have to at least compensate for the damage inflicted on Ukraine during the war and contribute to the reconstruction in Ukraine. The West will have to draw back from concentrating on punishing Russia and start helping Ukraine instead, which means demonstrating leadership and working hard on setting up the right incentive structure to compel both Ukraine and Russia to sign the agreement.

Provided that the West’s response is rapid enough, the situation may not be as hopeless as it might look. While it is extremely difficult to reverse Russia’s annexation and effective control of Crimea, the situation around Luhansk and Donetsk Peoples Republics is not firmly settled yet and there are no formal barriers for these newly “independent” states to consider reintegration with Ukraine if the incentives are there. The goal now is not finding ideal geopolitical solutions – there is none. It is about minimising the damage and working out an arrangement justifiable from a humanitarian standpoint.

### Unconditionality Link

#### NATO remains open to negotiations with Russia over the plan now

Nato, 1-27-2022, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natohq/115204.htm, "NATO-Russia: setting the record straight ," NATO (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Myth 2: NATO is aggressive and a threat to Russia

Fact: NATO is a defensive alliance, whose purpose is to protect our members. NATO's official policy is that "the Alliance does not seek confrontation and poses no threat to Russia." NATO didn't invade Georgia; NATO didn't invade Ukraine. Russia did.

NATO has reached out to Russia consistently and publicly over the past 30 years. We worked together on issues ranging from counter-narcotics and counter-terrorism to submarine rescue and civil emergency planning – even during periods of NATO enlargement. However, in 2014, in response to Russia's aggressive actions against Ukraine, NATO suspended practical cooperation with Russia. We do not seek confrontation, but we can't ignore Russia breaking international rules, undermining our stability and security.

In response to Russia's use of military force against Ukraine, NATO deployed four multinational battlegroups to the Baltic States and Poland in 2016. These units are not permanently based in the region, are in line with Allies' international commitments, and amount to around 5,000 troops. They do not pose a threat to Russia's 1,000,000 strong army. Before Russia's illegal annexation of Crimea, there were no Allied troops in the eastern part of the Alliance.

NATO remains open to meaningful dialogue with Russia. That is why NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has invited all members of the NATO-Russia Council to a series of meetings to discuss European security, including the situation in and around Ukraine, NATO-Russia relations, and arms control and non-proliferation.

### Link Magnifier –Strategic Concept

#### Emerging NATO Strategic Concept magnifies the link & uniqueness

Atlantic Council, 6-16-2022, https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/commentary/trackers-and-data-visualizations/visualizing-the-nato-strategic-concept/, "Visualizing the NATO Strategic Concept: Five ways to look at the Alliance's future," (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

At the upcoming NATO Summit in Madrid, the Alliance’s attention will be on the Russian invasion of Ukraine. President Vladimir Putin’s unprovoked and illegal war is transforming how the Euro-Atlantic—not to mention global—community views its security environment. The war is having a profound effect on NATO’s strategy, which is due for a refresh at the summit with Alliance members set to agree on their new Strategic Concept—a critical document that will guide NATO’s political and military development for the foreseeable future

Yet even before the invasion, NATO faced a dramatically changing security landscape. The systemic challenge from China, the existential threat of climate change, the emergence of disruptive technologies, the use of cyberattacks as a core instrument of power, supply-chain problems, democratic backsliding among allies and partners, questions about adequate defense investment, and more all combine to present a complex and unsettling future for the Alliance.

## Impacts

### Prediction K of the aff

#### Ignore their pre-Ukraine cards

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

The aftermath of the Ukraine war, as a protracted complex conflict, has revealed how the Russia-West geopolitical rivalry has entered uncharted territories with an asymmetrical war and unparallel weaponry: hard power versus sanctions and other tools of political economy, or sticky power. It seems to be a misguided venture of power dynamics: bullets and rockets versus economic and financial warfare, perpetuating a long hurting stalemate for all stakeholders. This paper addresses how the standoff between Putin's Russia and Western powers may amount to a new geopolitical paradigm shift and raises questions about the validity of certain conceptual frameworks: the renewal of ‘the Cold War’, the imposition of a ‘New World Order’, and the (im)balance of an assumed ‘Balance of Power’. These post-World War II mechanics of Détente were prolonged, after the fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 and the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, into the 21st century. The ‘post’ prefix endures the challenge of forecasting what would come after a three-decade prolongation of several concepts ushering to several unknowns of the Ukraine war postgame.

The ongoing dilemma of economic wars, besides the struggling armed confrontation inside Ukraine since 24 February 2022, has implied the need for a tabula-rasa re-conceptualisation of alternative frameworks in international relations. Moreover, another puzzle has emerged: is it a ‘sixth-generation war’ if we consider the disparity of weapons: Russia’s hard power and military tools versus the West’s sanctions and other restrictions of the political economy and dominance of sticky power? The question of a possible sixth-generation war builds on the differences of the fifth-generation warfare (5GW), which is conducted primarily through non-kinetic-military action, such as social engineering, misinformation, cyberattacks, along with emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence and fully autonomous systems. (1)

### Ukraine Lashout Mod

#### Negative momentum for Putin risks nuclear attack in Ukraine

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Further cutting lines of communications and supply. At the operational level, Russian commanders in this phase will be seized with the importance of cutting ground lines of communication in western Ukraine used to resupply Ukrainian forces and keep the war going. Surprisingly effective Ukrainian air defense has inflicted heavy losses on Russian aircraft, which often launch their weapons from Belarus or Russian airspace. Aerial and missile fires can be employed against fixed sites like storage or transshipment points, but, at present, the Russian army does not have a strong ground presence in western Ukraine. Instead, more highly trained special-operations units may be used to interdict ground convoys. As the campaign unfolds, sustained foreign assistance will mount in importance. As Russian desperation increases, Putin will attempt to signal that continued use of Polish and Romanian territory to supply Ukraine will have drastic consequences. Painful cyberattacks, covert and deniable intelligence operations, and other hybrid methods may be used for this purpose, including in the United States. In this phase, Putin will not order direct attacks on neighboring NATO countries for fear of bringing the Alliance into the war.

Raising the specter of nuclear attack. As the crisis worsens for Russia, the role of nuclear weapons will loom larger. In this phase of escalation, more strident threats to employ them will be accompanied by the overt display of tactical and strategic systems, publicized “drills,” repositioning of nuclear systems, and other activities intended to frighten and intimidate. Use of primitive chemical agents like chlorine will become more likely if campaign success eludes Russian forces. A demonstration or “test” using a low-yield tactical nuclear weapon in a remote area near the Ukrainian border could occur to add weight to these threats. Russian journalists, academics, and retired military and intelligence officers with contacts in the West will be enlisted to convey a determination to escalate further, if necessary, though such measures will carry extreme risk.

#### Ukraine risks nuclear escalation

Philip Wasielewski, 6-9-2022, Templeton Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He is a former Paramilitary Case Officer who had a 31-year career in the Directorate of Operations of the Central Intelligence Agency. https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/the-evolving-political-military-aims-in-the-war-in-ukraine-after-100-days/, "The Evolving Political-Military Aims in the War in Ukraine After 100 Days," (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Nuclear Option(s)

The fall of the Russian army is only one possible scenario for this war. Another is the Russian use of nuclear weapons. Putin could authorize a nuclear strike to provide a massive psychological shock to destroy Ukrainian resistance. The gap between Russia’s war aims, however reduced, and its military’s capabilities to achieve them might only be closed with nuclear weapons.

There are three nuclear options: a nuclear demonstration over Ukrainian territory, a nuclear strike against a major population center, and nuclear strikes for tactical purposes.

The first option, such as an airburst very high in the atmosphere over Ukraine, could provide a warning of escalation to come without causing the damage and fallout of a full strike. The Kremlin may believe it could reap the benefit of nuclear coercion without paying the full price of international outrage. This is probably a fallacy. The breaking of the nuclear taboo in any way, especially against a non-nuclear country that gave up its nuclear weapons to Russia, will bring worldwide condemnation and the ultimate in sanctions and isolation for Russia. There is also a chance that this would only further strengthen Ukrainian resolve to resist.

The second option—a strategic strike against a major Ukrainian city—would aim to harm Ukraine so greatly that its government would sue for peace to avoid further destruction. It is a horrific possibility that might be tempered by several factors. The first is the reluctance of those in the chain of command to follow that order for moral or practical reasons, anticipating worldwide revulsion. A second factor could be the difficulty in target selection to not destroy a large Russian-speaking population (Odessa and Kharkiv), the mother of Russian civilization (Kyiv), or a city close to NATO territory (Lviv). Finally, the Russian chain of command might hesitate to conduct a strategic nuclear strike fearing that instead of terrorizing Ukrainian society, it might embolden it to resist and refuse to ever surrender or negotiate.

The third option—nuclear strikes to affect the tactical situation on the battlefield—offers Russia a way to use firepower to make up for deficiencies of manpower. In theory, “small” nuclear strikes of one, five, or ten kilotons could punch holes in Ukrainian lines to allow Russian forces to penetrate, encircle, and route the Ukrainian army.

However, Ukrainian forces are not concentrated enough to provide a lucrative target for nuclear weapons. This is a war of company- and battalion-sized units fighting in dispersed formations. Destroying one or several such formations is unlikely to unhinge any defensive line, which could be reestablished by other forces a few miles back. Would such minor tactical gains be worth the further punishment to Russia’s economy that international reaction would bring? Furthermore, the effects of blast, radiation, and fallout can affect Russia’s own forces. An airburst—the best way to reduce fallout—over a fortified urban area may kill many of the defenders but also destroy it in a way so that mechanized forces cannot move through. Russian forces, like Union forces during the Civil War’s Battle of the Crater, could find themselves trapped in the destruction of their own making.

Russia would also need to consider the effect of nuclear fallout on its troops and citizens. The NUKEMAP interactive site, created by nuclear historian Alexander Wellerstein, estimates that a five-kiloton airburst will create a 500-rem radiation radius of one kilometer.[30] Per the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission, humans exposed to 500 rems of radiation without medical treatment will die. Doses between 300 and 400 rems offer a 50 percent chance of death within 60 days.[31] After a non-strategic nuclear attack, advancing Russian forces therefore must bypass the strike area but then would move into territory not totally affected by the strike and possibly still defended.

If part of an airburst reaches the ground or if there is a deliberate ground burst, then fallout would follow the winds. In the spring, the prevailing winds in northern, southern, and eastern Ukraine are easterly or southeasterly, causing fallout to move into the Donetsk People’s Republic, Luhansk People’s Republic, Crimea, or Russia itself. In the summer, prevailing winds become northwesterly and westerly, which could bring fallout into Belarus or NATO countries.[32] While the Russians showed little regard for the safety of their troops occupying Chernobyl, they cannot ignore the basic realities of tactical nuclear warfare.

This very simplified review of nuclear weapons effects is meant to illustrate that the actual application of tactical nuclear weapons is not a panacea or magic wand to sweep away enemy forces. They may still (God forbid) be used in this war, but the tactical advantages they offer may not be worth the tactical challenges or strategic costs they bring.

#### Russia progress checks Ukraine escalation

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Escalation triggers

As Putin and his senior advisers consider options, conditions on the ground will drive their calculus. Should the Russian military manage to recover its footing and resume progress, however halting, more extreme options may be held in reserve. If the campaign evolves into a “frozen” conflict, like the Donbas but on a larger scale, Putin’s focus will shift to destabilizing the Volodymyr Zelenskyy regime in Kyiv and sanctions relief. Should Ukraine achieve decisive success in recovering its national territory, Putin’s survival may be at risk, and incentives to employ harsher and more high-risk measures will grow. Escalation to each of the below “rungs” will depend on Putin’s perception and assessment of how the campaign is progressing and the prospects for ultimate success or failure. Though speculative, likely triggers for escalation into each subsequent phase of the conflict might include

an assessment that the campaign has stalled temporarily and different approaches are needed to regain momentum;

an assessment that the campaign has stalled outright and recovery is unlikely without more extreme measures; and

an assessment that defeat is imminent, and that Putin may fall from power, placing all his options on the table.

As the conflict drags on, NATO and European Union (EU) actions can be decisive one way or the other, as described further below.

#### Ukraine defeat risks Putin nuclear escalation

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Transitioning the conflict in Ukraine into a frozen conflict lasting years, as has been done in the Donbas since 2014, may be Putin’s best option now. A resolute Ukrainian government and highly motivated Ukrainian forces will continue to fight to reassert sovereignty over the national territory. Continued Western support will enable Ukrainian forces to grow stronger, though it may not be possible to retake the areas newly controlled by Russia without more armor and combat aircraft. In this scenario, Putin will have to consider more extreme and high-risk strategies to stave off defeat, prevent economic collapse, divert public opinion, and stay in power. Even more than success in Ukraine, regime survival will become the overriding priority.

With this in mind, what escalatory options could Putin choose?

Employing cyber tools. Under such desperate circumstances, Putin may elect to employ the full scope of his offensive cyber capabilities, which are formidable. Repeatedly in recent years, Russian cyber weapons have been employed successfully. While Russia has employed its cyber tools at the tactical level to some success in Ukraine, for reasons that remain somewhat unclear, the potential strategic effects of these weapons have been held in reserve so far in the campaign. Potential targets could include critical infrastructure such as power and transportation grids, nuclear-power plants, healthcare systems, government operations, the financial sector, and military command and control in the United States and Europe. These attacks would certainly invite retaliation, but Putin may see them as warranted to stave off defeat and preserve his regime.

Employing WMD. Putin may also choose to resort to weapons of mass destruction to cow the Ukrainian public and frighten off Western support. This could take the form of chemical strikes using military-grade chemical agents, such as nerve or mustard gas (although a signatory to the 1993 Chemical Weapons Convention, Russia is known to retain substantial stocks). Russia has already accused Ukraine and the United States of establishing chemical- and biological-weapons facilities inside Ukraine, a likely precursor to its own use. Russian formations field organic nuclear, biological, and chemical (NBC) protection units at all levels, from brigade to combined-arms army, and Russian planners will surely contemplate using them if faced with a humiliating defeat.

Employing nuclear weapons. Use of tactical nuclear weapons inside Ukraine is also a possibility in a last bid to achieve military success, although senior Russian military officials may balk at such an extraordinarily risky step. As NATO’s nuclear umbrella does not extend over Ukraine, Putin may discount the chance of retaliation. An added benefit could be a sharp warning of Russia’s willingness to use nuclear weapons if provoked—for example, if NATO ultimately entered the conflict to save a foundering Ukraine. This option would take the form of low-yield tactical weapons, launched from aircraft or field artillery, or delivered via Iskander-M short-ranged ballistic missiles or Kalibr cruise missiles. Such use would not necessarily lead to uncontrolled escalation, and is well within the calculus of Russian military doctrine. The shock of such an event would be profound, and could lead to Ukraine’s submission or acceptance of unfavorable terms. Similarly, Russian forces could engineer a nuclear “accident” involving one or more of Ukraine’s fifteen reactors, located at Yuzhnukraines, Rivne, Khmelnitsky, and Zaporizhzhia. (Chernobyl, located one hundred kilometers north of Kyiv, is not operational, but still houses large amounts of radioactive material.) The spread of radioactive fallout would, however, be very weather dependent, making this a very high-risk venture. Unquestionably, Russia would be condemned even by its few remaining supporters, to say nothing of an aroused and angry international community. At this stage, Russia is already an international pariah, with little moral currency left to lose. Ordering the use of tactical nuclear weapons could well be game changing. It might also drive Putin from power.

#### Ukraine stalemate cracks Russian military

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Russian war aims have contracted from conquering Ukraine to simply expanding the territory of the statelets it supposedly went to war to protect. By contrast, Ukraine’s war aims have grown from survival to the recovery of all territory lost to Russia since 2014. These uncompromising objectives lock Russia and Ukraine into a war of attrition with little hope of a negotiated settlement. The ongoing battle in Donbas could provide Russia with some tactical successes and a propaganda victory but probably not a strategic one. In fact, further losses could weaken the Russian army to the point that it enables later Ukrainian counterattacks or even causes the Russian army to fracture. Leaders in Moscow may find that a depleted army leaves them few options for victory and that even their superiority in nuclear weapons may not be as useful as supposed.

### A2 Ukraine Turns

#### No Ukraine escalation – Biden would block Ukraine attacks into Russia

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Now the West is supporting an unnecessary war, playing with fire as it builds up Ukrainian firepower, a country whose leadership, if it finds itself losing badly, would probably have no qualms about using NATO weapons to fire into Russia, thus provoking a Russian attack on nearby NATO members. That could lead to a Third World War. To his credit, Biden would not tolerate such a Ukrainian offensive.

If only Zelensky had said in the days leading up to the Russian invasion, “Ukraine has no attention of applying for NATO membership”— 9 words—which in fact is the de facto position of NATO—there would have been no Russian invasion. By his refusal to do this he has created a situation where parts of whole towns have been destroyed—in the case of Mariupol, totally destroyed. Ukraine has no money to rebuild its country, and it should be aware of the likelihood that the West will never give it anything like the full amount of what it will need.

Ukraine is now burdened by the fast-growing number of the quite unnecessary deaths of its young solders, with all the concomitant pain that is heaped on their loved ones. Plus, the killing of thousands upon thousands of innocent civilians. For what? To defend the macho egos of Zelensky and his fellow rulers. Zelensky in the days before the invasion had peace within his grasp, but he threw it away as casually as he would a cigarette packet with his refusal to say Ukraine would not seek to enter NATO.

The great English poet and writer Rudyard Kipling wrote about the First World War in which his son died, “If any question why we died, tell them because our fathers lied”. So, it is with Ukraine.

#### Ukrainian conflict risks elevating Iran – several ways

Arman Mahmoudian, 6-3-2022, https://trendsresearch.org/insight/03-06-2022/, "Russia-Ukraine war: Implications for the RSII coalition," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

On a regional level, the second Russo-Ukrainian war could potentially be an opportunity for Tehran. The war could create a rift between Russia and Israel, despite Israel’s efforts to remain seated on the fence. However, the increasing number of Ukrainian Jews fleeing to Israel has put Israeli officials in an uncomfortable position, driving many of them to take a stand against Russia, including Israel’s Foreign Minister, Arie Lapid, who condemned Russia’s aggression in Ukraine saying that the Kremlin’s decision had no “justification” and that “the ground [of Ukraine] is soaked with the blood of innocent civilians.”[12] Russia promptly responded to Lapid’s comment by summoning Israel’s ambassador and accusing Israel of using the war in Ukraine to “distract” international attention from the Palestinian issue.[13]

If the current Russo-Israeli conflict escalates further, Iran might find itself in an advantageous position with regard to the future of its military cooperation with Russia, especially since Israel, prior to these events, always played a central role in Moscow’s considerations when it came to arms deals with Iran. Prior to the Russo-Ukrainian war, at the request of Israel, Russia refrained, multiple times, from suppling Iran with offensive weapons that could disrupt the balance of power between Iran and Israel.[14] But now that events in Ukraine have shaken Russo-Israeli relations, it would be reasonable for Iran to hope that Russia has liberated itself from the “Israeli factor” with regard to Russo-Persian arms deals.

Another regional impact of the Russo-Ukraine war on Iran concerns Russo-Persian cooperation in Syria. Russia’s military focus in Ukraine has forced Moscow to withdraw a significant part of its forces from Syria.[15] The Russian withdrawal from Syria will create a vacuum of power which Iran has already started filling by deploying Iranian forces and Shia militias to replace Russian troops in Syria.[16] This would likely make the Assad regime more than ever dependent on Iran, which would give Iran the advantage of expanding its influence over Syria. Given that many, including US and British officials, believe that the Russo-Ukrainian war will drag on for years,[17] Assad once again might have to consider Iran as its major ally, which increases the political value of Iran for Syria.

The timing of this rising opportunity for Iran could not have been better. Many in Iran were worried that Russia, having secured major construction and investment agreements with Syria, was outpacing Iran in collecting the spoils of war in the post-civil war era.[18] However, now that Russia is gradually departing, the strategic value of Iran’s presence in Syria is growing, Tehran might find itself in a position to benefit from the Syrian regime by signing construction contracts or obtaining rights of exploration in Syria’s mineral mines and oil fields, which Iran has had its eyes on for a long time.[19] This would provide Iran with a window of opportunity to catch up with Russia in Syria and also to make-up for part of the financial resources expended by Iran during the Civil War.

#### Ukrainian conflict destabilizes Syria

Arman Mahmoudian, 6-3-2022, https://trendsresearch.org/insight/03-06-2022/, "Russia-Ukraine war: Implications for the RSII coalition," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Syria

As previously mentioned, the most apparent impacts of the Russo-Ukrainian war on Syria have a security and military dimension. Even though today we can safely argue that Assad has regained control of two-thirds of his country, including most of the central, southern, and Mediterranean coastal regions,[20] and has successfully secured his political survival, this does not mean that the war in Syria is over; for as long as the war persists, the tide can still be turned. The timing of the Russians’ retreat from Syria is a very sensitive issue for Damascus as it comes at a time when US special operation forces based in Syria’s al-Tanf are still operative,[21] large areas of northern Syria are still occupied by Turkish Armed Forces,[22] and a coalition of nearly 100 thousand armed rebels under the leadership of the Syrian National Army and Syrian National Front for Liberation are still active.[23] Thus, Assad’s struggles to take back control of all territories and his need for foreign support are not over yet.

At this point, it seems that the only solution to the Russian pull-out for the pro-Assad coalition is to replace Russians with Iran-led forces. However, one can say that this solution has one major disadvantage: Iran’s lack of sufficient military capability to replace the Russian Air Force and Navy. Iran, indeed, has the resources to make up for the absence of Russian manpower, but the efficiency and primary function of Russia’s campaign in Syria has never been based on manpower. Russian forces barely participate in any battleground fights, and their operations have primarily been limited to aerial and naval bombardment. In fact, Russia’s navy and air force firepower was what pro-Assad forces needed to turn the tide of war[24] and recapture most of the areas that Assad lost prior to Russian military intervention in Syria in 2015.

In addition to Iran’s lack of capability to make up for the absence of Russia’s firepower, its endeavors to fill Russia’s place in Syria might provoke Israel, who has already bombed the positions of Iran-backed forces in Syria more than 200 times.[25] Russia’s heavy involvement in Ukraine combined with Iran’s growing presence in Syria might encourage Tel Aviv to increase its attacks on pro-Iran forces in Syria, which might lead to further escalation between Iran and Israel, resulting in the renewed destabilization of Syria.

The implications of the Russo-Ukrainian war for Syria are not just at the regional level; in fact, Syria could be severely impacted on an international level, especially given the current global climate in which the US is pressing its own allies, such as Israel,[26] to take a stronger stand against Russia. It is likely that the White House will apply harsher economic and diplomatic sanctions, which could include imposing a blockade or increasing its support for anti-government forces in countries within Russia’s sphere of influence, including Syria. Damascus would be a suitable target for the West since, relatively speaking, in comparison to Russia’s other spheres of influence, such as Belarus and Central Asian regimes, Syria is further away from Moscow, and thus would require a more substantial number of resources and efforts for Russia to counter the West there. In addition, in the last few years, the Kremlin’s propaganda machine has taken great pride in Russia’s military success in Syria.[27] Hence the change of status quo in Syria would be a severe blow to Kremlin’s military prestige. However, we should keep in mind that targeting Syria is a perilous choice and likely would result in the destabilization of Syria, which could spur the re-emergence of terrorist groups, as was the case with ISIS in 2014.

Overall, it seems that in comparison to Iran, Syria is likely to face harsher consequences, and only time will tell how the Kremlin’s war in Ukraine will reshape Assad’s destiny in Syria.

#### Ukraine has a better long game than Russia in the SQ - plan not needed

Philip Wasielewski, 6-9-2022, Templeton Fellow at the Foreign Policy Research Institute. He is a former Paramilitary Case Officer who had a 31-year career in the Directorate of Operations of the Central Intelligence Agency. https://www.fpri.org/article/2022/06/the-evolving-political-military-aims-in-the-war-in-ukraine-after-100-days/, "The Evolving Political-Military Aims in the War in Ukraine After 100 Days," (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

The Tactical Situation

The Battle of the Donbas has been a meat grinder for both sides. Each army is losing several hundred soldiers killed or wounded daily.[17] While the Ukrainian army has conducted a stubborn defense, the Russian army has advanced on the flanks of the exposed Ukrainian salient in Donbas. The easternmost edge of the salient is at the cities of Severodonetsk and Lysychansk, and its flanks are near the towns of Popasna and Dronivka. Russian advances taking Popasna and spreading out across the base of this salient threaten Joint Force Organization units along the Siverskyi Donets River. There has also been Russian progress to the west of this salient in the vicinity of Lyman.

The Kremlin would likely consider further advances requiring the evacuation of this salient and the surrender of Severdonetsk and Lysychansk a major step forward in achieving its political goal of “liberating” all of Donetsk and Luhansk. However, this accomplishes little strategically unless Russian forces encircle and capture tens of thousands of Ukrainian troops. Based on previous Russian rates of advance, the Ukrainians should be able to withdraw in good order if a decision to conduct a tactical retreat is made in a timely manner. Occupying all of Donetsk and Luhansk oblasts up to their administrative borders accomplishes nothing strategically, beyond a short-term propaganda victory, if it does not destroy the Joint Force Organization Group. Furthermore, it does nothing to prevent the flow of Western arms and ammunition into Ukraine to increase the size and capabilities of the Ukrainian army. Therefore, a tactical defeat in Donbas is not a strategic defeat for Ukraine if it is able to preserve a large part of its army or if the ongoing efforts to enlarge and equip its army are successful. It is not a strategic victory for Russia if it ends up destroying its army through high casualties, which cannot be replaced anytime soon, and crushed morale.

The Strategic Situation

The Russian military is expending thousands of lives in Donbas to make incremental, almost World War I–style, advances over terrain that has no real strategic value. Russia is fighting a war of attrition. In the past, Russia and the Soviet Union had the manpower to make this an effective strategy. However, Russia today no longer has the mechanisms to recruit, train, equip, officer, and deploy substantial new military formations.

In early April, I estimated Russia had suffered approximately 10,000 soldiers killed in action (KIA) and a total of 35,000–38,000 casualties. It is still hard to estimate losses, but if Russian killed-in-action figures are now, per British intelligence estimates, roughly 15,000, then total casualties by early June could be approximately 50,000 men.[18]

Who will replace them? The 130,000 Russian conscripts called up on April 1, 2022, are not supposed to go to a war zone (but many will). Putin, probably fearing social unrest, passed up the opportunity on Victory Day on May 9 to declare war and announce a general mobilization of Russian manpower.

Without a general mobilization, how can the Russian army meet wartime requirements and replace its losses? As word of horrible combat conditions reaches the population, recruiting of contract soldiers will suffer. It probably already has, based on the extreme decision to allow up to 50-year-old men to volunteer.[19] Many contract soldiers are already announcing their intention to leave the army or refuse to serve in the “special military operation” that Moscow claims is not a war. Increased conscription cannot make up for recruiting shortfalls in a country where evading military service is practically a national sport.

If enough soldiers are found, who will lead them? Even before the war, Russia was having a difficult time retaining junior officers.[20] In this war, officers of all levels have borne an extraordinary brunt of casualties. Many officer cadets have graduated early to participate in the war. Furthermore, who will train the new soldiers? Basic and advanced training in Russia’s army is done at the individual unit level, but many training officers and noncommissioned officers have already deployed with their units to Ukraine. This leaves limited cadres at home to instruct new conscripts.[21] Metaphorically speaking, the Russian army is eating its seed corn.

If enough enlisted men and junior officers can be found to serve as replacements for the tens of thousands of casualties, can Russia equip them with modern weapons? Equipment losses are catastrophic. The Oryx website, using conservative, thoroughly documented confirmation techniques, estimates that as of the end of May 2022, Russia had lost 741 tanks, 1,342 armored/infantry fighting vehicles, and 27 fixed-wing combat aircraft.[22] Actual losses are likely higher.

Besides these losses, vehicles, airplanes, and helicopters involved in three months of nonstop fighting require major refitting, which is unlikely to happen while combat operations are underway. War can exhaust machines as well as men, and without proper maintenance, existing hardware will become incapable of supporting operations. New replacements for destroyed equipment will not be coming. Russia’s main tank factories have shut down due to sanctions, which have also hobbled its aircraft industry.[23] T-62 tanks have been pulled out of reserve, but half-century-old tanks are no answer to modern anti-tank weapons.[24] Decades of munitions production have been used up in three months, and the decline in the use of guided and cruise missiles indicates that precision-guided weapons are in short supply.[25]

Ukraine is also facing serious military difficulties. It has not concentrated enough forces in Donbas to match Russia’s current quantitative edge, and it too is suffering high casualties. The previous article in early April estimated that Ukraine had suffered approximately 3,100 killed in action and 16,000–18,000 casualties of all types. On April 16, President Zelensky announced that Ukraine had suffered between 2,500 and 3,000 killed in action and an additional 10,000 wounded. Extrapolating from these figures to the present, Ukrainian military KIA figures could be approaching 6,000 men and approximately 25,000 total casualties due to the high intensity of the battles of the Donbas and Mariupol.[26] Per Oryx, Ukraine has lost 186 tanks, 276 armored/infantry fighting vehicles, and 22 fixed-wing combat aircraft, but these again are conservative figures.[27] Attrition warfare is cutting both ways. The winner may be the side that lasts just a moment longer than the other.

There are strategic differences between Russian and Ukrainian losses. Ukraine is in a better position to replenish its losses of men and materiel. It can afford to trade some territory for time to assimilate Western supplies. With incoming weapons from the West and the training of new volunteers, the Ukrainian army will grow in numbers and capabilities, while the Russian army is unlikely to. When ready, Ukraine will have the forces to counterattack. The Croatian army did the same after losing territory in 1992 to Serbian forces. By 1995, with Western tutoring and supplies, Croatia had rebuilt its army and counterattacked, forcing the Serbs out of the Krajina region within a week. Ukraine could play a similar “long game.”

#### Russia reliance on China hurts India

Laxman Kumar Behera 6-15-2022, Research Fellow at IDSA Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (MP-IDSA) https://ucigcc.org/news/what-ukraine-is-teaching-us-about-geoeconomics/, "What Ukraine Is Teaching Us About Geoeconomics," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:7-1-2022)

This war has many implications for India’s strategic posture. Ideally, India would have liked a normal relationship between Russia and the West. The war has created a lot of economic difficulties, particularly through the hike in oil prices and through its cascading impact on general inflation, and this is a big concern for the government which is going to face the general election in the two years’ time. The government is taking it very seriously and is trying to contain the inflation through subsidies, but obviously it has implications on the fiscal balance.

The second implication is on India’s defense preparedness, which has been affected in two ways. One is through sanctions. There are sanctions on Russian banks, and so the Indian government has difficulty in paying for Russian defense supplies.

The war has also disturbed Russia’s companies’ focus on executing contracts with India, and there are certain delays and some modernization projects that have been affected.

But the biggest geopolitical fallout of the war is Russia and China coming together. As Tai said, Russia is increasingly becoming the junior partner of China and that will have implications for India because China is India’s biggest strategic rival and historically, Russia has been a big supporter of India in various forms, including in the UN Security Council. Going forward, it’s unclear whether that will be the case. The key factor that will drive India’s relationship with Russia will be the Chinese factor.

Russia forming a strong partnership with China has not been to India’s strategic advantage. Having said that, India knows that its future lies with the West. Strategic concerns about Beijing is increasingly pushing India closer to the U.S., Europe, and other countries, particularly, Australia and Japan. At the same time, India will also try to retain a degree of strategic autonomy which that has been India’s DNA for a long time.

On sanctions on Russia, India won’t be party to the West-led geoeconomics order because India itself has been a victim of sanctions in the past. So India will try to maintain some balance of autonomy, but I think its future lies more with the West than with Russia.

### Kaliningrad outweighs

#### Kaliningrad risks global escalation – fastest scenario

Murad Jandali, 6-28-2022 Al-Estiklal Staffwriter https://www.alestiklal.net/en/view/14082/will-kaliningrad-ignite-the-spark-of-confrontation-between-nato-and-russia, "Will Kaliningrad Ignite the Spark of Confrontation Between NATO and Russia?," Al-Estiklal Newspaper (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

A Flashpoint in Tensions

For a long time, Kaliningrad was part of Germany, but the exclave became part of Russia in 1946 and was formally occupied by the Soviet Union after the war in Europe ended.

After the dissolution of the Soviet Union and then the accession of Poland and the Baltic states to the EU in 2004, the problem of the movement of Russian citizens and the transport of goods to and from Kaliningrad arose, and a way was reached for the transit of individuals and goods for the residents of the region according to procedures agreed upon by Russia, Poland, Lithuania, and the EU.

The Suwałki Gap, with a length of about 104 km, was established on the land border between Poland and Lithuania, linking the territory of Belarus (allied with Russia) with Kaliningrad.

During the past period, Kaliningrad was the subject of controversy between Russia and European countries, as former Deputy Minister of Defense of Poland Romuald Sheremetiev called for the need to disarm Kaliningrad, describing the region as a powder keg on which NATO sits.

Weeks ago, NATO began massive naval exercises in the Baltic Sea near the Russian exclave for a period of two weeks, with the participation of 16 countries, including Finland and Sweden.

According to press reports, Moscow is using Kaliningrad to threaten Europe, as its port is free of ice all year round, unlike many Russian ports. As it is also headquarters to its Baltic Fleet, the exclave served as a stronghold during both World Wars and a defensive fortress during the Cold War.

Moscow announced last month that in Kaliningrad, the Russian army simulated the launch of nuclear missiles at imagined hostile sites in Europe.

However, Sweden expressed its fears of using that area to launch a naval attack on its island of Gotland in the Baltic Sea.

The same fears were expressed by NATO, which indicated that Moscow could use the exclave to invade Poland and Lithuania by creating a land corridor from its territory to Belarus.

According to observers, any direct Russian attack on Lithuania, a member of NATO, will be seen as an act of war against NATO and may ignite World War III.

While Moscow believes that NATO's expansion in northwest Europe near its borders is based on long-term plans and that the inclusion of Finland and Sweden in the alliance came to impose a siege on the Kaliningrad exclave and the Russian fleet in the Baltic Sea.

Andrey Gurulyov, member of the Duma's defense committee, said that London would be the first city to be bombed by Russia if the siege of Kaliningrad, led to a war with NATO.

Expected Scenarios

In turn, political researcher Mahmoud Alloush stressed in a statement to Al-Estiklal that “the Kaliningrad issue could indeed turn into a new flashpoint between Moscow and NATO, in light of the great collapse in Russian-Western relations.”

“Lithuania's restrictions on transit between Russia and Kaliningrad, even if they are part of the implementation of sanctions, threaten to further exacerbate tension with Russia,” he pointed out.

“Europe has no interest in fueling the conflict with Russia, and this requires a smart policy in applying sanctions so that their application does not lead to the isolation of Kaliningrad from Russia,” he noted.

Mr. Alloush also stressed that “the agreements concluded between Lithuania and Russia prior to its accession to the EU in 2004 included the free passage of goods and people along the railway line between Russia and Kaliningrad, but EU sanctions against Russia give Vilnius the power to inspect shipments to ensure that no prohibited goods are transported through its territory.”

“The Suwałki Gap is Russia’s only land supply link to Kaliningrad. Moscow views these steps as an attempt to restrict its access to its own territory. It treats this issue as a security threat to it before it is a restriction on the transit of its goods to and from Kaliningrad,” he continued.

“The Russian attack on Ukraine revealed that the rules that had deterred Russia during the past decades from attacking NATO members in the Baltics no longer exist,” Mr. Alloush pointed out.

“NATO seeks to adapt to the profound transformations that occurred in the European security structure as a result of the war by strengthening the Eastern Front and bringing in new members to it,” he explained.

However, an analysis by the Economist magazine revealed the difficulties that Moscow would face, if it saw its exploitation, in the event of a war with its neighbors or NATO.

Kaliningrad is a region that provides Russia's first line of defense from the west, says Jonas Kjellen, an analyst at FOI, Sweden’s state defense-research agency, noting that this region is full of radar systems that provide air surveillance of central Europe.

According to the Economist, Russia supplied Kaliningrad in 2012 with the Russian S-400 long-range missile defense system, and in 2016, it sent short-range Iskander missiles, bringing nuclear warheads uncomfortably close to European cities.

In turn, the Kremlin justified this by saying that it is a necessary step to confront the growing US military presence in the region.

Although Russia has not admitted to having nuclear weapons in Kaliningrad, the Federation of American Scientists concluded in 2018 that the Kremlin had significantly modernized a nuclear weapons cache in the region, based on an analysis of satellite imagery.

According to a study by the Rand Corporation for Strategic Research, Russia's seizure of the Suwałki Gap, which is the most important gap in the defenses of the Western Alliance, will cut off the Baltic states and Poland from its allies, isolate the northern region of NATO, paralyze communications, and complicate aid to it.

“This will contribute to the possibility of the fall of the capitals of Estonia and Latvia within sixty hours, as well as the ability of advanced Russian air defense systems to disrupt the airspace in the Baltic states and Poland,” the study revealed.

It is noteworthy that Russia deploys in Kaliningrad, according to Western figures, about 200,000 of its forces, a number of S-400 and S-300 air defense batteries, the Iskander-M long-range ballistic missile system, in addition to the Baltiysk naval base where the Russian Baltic Fleet is based.

### Plan A Mod

#### Even the perception of encirclement triggers Plan A causing extinction

Ellen Ioanes and Dave Mosher, 01-23-2020, (Ellen Ioanes is the Military & Defense Editorial Fellow at INSIDER. She is a graduate of Columbia Journalism School and Davidson College. Her work appears in the Guardian, the Center for Public Integrity, the Daily Dot, HuffPost India, and more. Dave Mosher reports news and features stories about science and technology, with human and robotic spaceflight as the primary focus of his 15-year multimedia journalism career.), “A terrifying new animation shows how 1 'tactical' nuclear weapon could trigger a US-Russia war that kills 34 million people in 5 hours”, Business Insider, https://www.businessinsider.com/tactical-nuclear-weapons-escalation-us-russia-war-animated-strike-map-2019-9/ceng

More than 91 million people in Russia, the US, and NATO-allied countries might be killed or injured within three hours following a single "nuclear warning shot," according to a terrifying new simulation. The simulation is called "Plan A," and it's an audio-visual piece that was first posted to to YouTube on September 6. (You can watch the full video at the end of this story.) Researchers at the Science and Global Security lab at Princeton University created the animation, which shows how a battle between Russia and NATO allies that uses so-called low-yield or "tactical" nuclear weapons — which can pack a blast equivalent to those the US used to destroy Hiroshima or Nagasaki in World War II — might feasibly and quickly snowball into a global nuclear war. "This project is motivated by the need to highlight the potentially catastrophic consequences of current US and Russian nuclear war plans. The risk of nuclear war has increased dramatically in the past two years," the project states on its website. The video has an ominous, droning soundtrack and a digital map design straight out of the 1983 movie "WarGames." The Cold War-era movie, in which a young Matthew Broderick accidentally triggers a nuclear war, "was exactly the reference point," simulation designer Alex Wellerstein told Insider. But while simulations can be frightening, they can also be incredibly helpful: governments can use them to develop contingency plans to respond to nuclear disasters and attacks in the least escalatory way, and they can also help ordinary citizens learn how to survive a nuclear attack. "Plan A" comes as tensions between Russia and NATO allies ratchet up. Both Russia and the US are testing weapons previously banned under the Intermediate-range Nuclear Forces treaty, often called INF. Russian bombers have also cruised into US airspace repeatedly, and the US recently sent its B-2 Spirit stealth bomber on a mission in the Arctic — right in Russia's backyard. This is how a NATO-Russian confrontation could quickly escalate into nuclear war. The simulation starts with a conventional war between NATO and Russian troops. Conventional warfare — namely all conflict short of nuclear, chemical or biological weapons — escalates into nuclear warfare when Russia launches a nuclear "warning shot" from a base near Kaliningrad to stop NATO advancement. Russia doesn't have a "no first use" policy — it dropped it in 1993. NATO forces respond by launching a tactical nuclear strike. The US already has tactical nuclear weapons, such as B61-12 gravity bombs, and more planned under US President Donald Trump's 2018 Nuclear Posture Review. Included in the plan is a low-yield warhead intended for use in a submarine-launched ballistic missile, as well as a sea-launched cruise missile. These kinds of weapons are designed for targets on the battlefield, like troops or munitions supplies, as opposed to long- or intermediate-range nuclear missiles that are fired from one country to another, for example, targeting an enemy's bombers and ICBM silos — or even cities. Tactical nuclear strikes up the ante. If the nuclear threshold is crossed, the simulation finds, then both the US and Russia would respond with tactical nuclear weapons. Russia would send 300 warheads to NATO targets, including advancing troops, in both aircraft and short-range missiles — overwhelming force that would obliterate tanks, fortified positions and soldiers unlike anything ever seen in battle before. Supporting forces and civilians not immediately killed would be susceptible to painful and even fatal radiation exposure. NATO would respond by sending about 180 tactical nuclear weapons to Russia via aircraft in equally devastating retaliation. The simulation was constructed using independent analysis of nuclear force postures in NATO countries and Russia, including the availability of nuclear weapons, their yields, and possible targets, according to the Science and Global Security lab. The tactical phase of the simulation shows about 2.6 million casualties over three hours. Instead of the tactical weapons de-escalating the conflict, as proponents claim they would, the simulation shows conflict spiraling out of control after the use of tactical weapons. Russia's tactical weapons would destroy much of Europe, the simulation posits. In response, NATO would launch submarine- and US-based strategic nuclear weapons toward Russia's nuclear arsenals — 600 warheads in total. Strategic nuclear weapons have a longer range, so Russia, knowing that NATO nukes are headed for its weapons cache, would throw all its weight behind missiles launched from silos, mobile launchers, and submarines. The casualties during this phase would be 3.4 million in 45 minutes. This leads to 85.3 million additional casualties in the final phase of the nuclear war simulation. In the wake of previous attacks, both Russia and NATO would launch warheads toward each other's 30 most populous cities in the final stage of of the scenario, using five to 10 warheads for each city depending on its size. This phase would cause 85.3 million casualties — both deaths and injuries. But the total casualty count from the entire battle (of less than 5 hours) would be 34.1 million deaths and 57.4 million injuries, or a combined 91.3 million casualties overall. But that's just the immediate conflict: The entire world would be affected by nuclear disaster in the months, years, and decades to come. The radioactive fallout from the nuclear disaster would cause additional deaths and injuries. Studies also suggest that, even with a limited nuclear engagement, Earth's atmosphere would cool dramatically, driving famine, refugee crises, additional conflicts, and more deaths.

### Middle East Mod

#### Russia will counter NATO clout with Middle East escalation

Arman Mahmoudian, 6-3-2022, https://trendsresearch.org/insight/03-06-2022/, "Russia-Ukraine war: Implications for the RSII coalition," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Since the start of Russia’s military operation in Ukraine on 24 February 2022, speculation over the cost of this war for Moscow has been the topic of discussion among experts and scholars. The financial losses in the aftermath of Western sanctions, diplomatic isolation, military personnel casualties, and the severe damages to Russia’s war machine were the main objects of speculation. As the Russo-Ukrainian War escalated, so did the complexity of its dimensions. However, the long-term implications of the war for Russia appear to be even more perplexing. The complexity of these implications was heightened when, in mid-March 2022, several media outlets reported that Russia started to withdraw some of its troops from Syria, while also drawing thousands of fighters from the Syrian army and allied militias[1] to bolster the military operation in Ukraine and step up its offensive in the east of the country. Immediately after, Middle Eastern media outlets claimed that Iran would fill the vacuum of power created by the Russian withdrawal by increasing the presence of its troops and Shia militants in Syria.[2] This could shift the balance of influence in Syria in favor of Tehran.

Russia’s military operation in Ukraine has already started to affect Syria, so one might ask what the implications of Russia’s war in Ukraine would be for the Russia-Syria-Iran-Iraq (RSII) security coalition. This is a coalition that the Kremlin has been building in the Middle East with the help of Iran and its Shia allies. The Russo-Shia cooperation reached its peak in 2015, when the RSII security coalition, with two headquarters in Baghdad and Damascus, was officially formed.[3] The RSII coalition, since its formation, has been holding annual meetings in Baghdad to exchange intel and discuss recent regional developments, the last of which was held on February 25th, the day after Russia’s military operation in Ukraine.[4] However, since then, many things have changed. Russia’s recent gradual withdrawal from Syria, and the fact that the war in Ukraine might not result in Moscow’s favor, indicates that the Kremlin might have to shift its attention to deal with the growing escalation with NATO. Thus, it is very likely that Russia’s policy toward the Middle East and the RSII will change. In this context, Russia might choose to escalate tensions in the Middle East by sending Iran new advanced weapons that could potentially alter the balance of power in the region, or it might encourage Syria’s Assad to launch a new offensive against Turkish-backed rebels in the north or the US-backed SDF. Russia might find further escalation in the Middle East beneficial since it can force the West to divert its attention from Ukraine to the Middle East. Thus, it is vital to understand the implications of the Russo-Ukrainian War for the RSII coalition. To do so, we must first analyze the implications of the war individually for each member and then for the coalition as a whole.

#### Middle East war escalates

Lantier 19, PhD @ Geneva (Alex, “Syrian army, Iran threaten counterattack against Turkish invasion of Syria,” <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2019/10/14/syri-o14.html>)

The conflicts erupting between the different capitalist regimes in the Middle East pose an imminent threat not only to the population of the region, but to the entire world. Workers can give no support to any of the competing military plans and strategic appetites of these reactionary regimes. With America, Europe, Russia and China all deeply involved in the proxy war in Syria, a large-scale Middle East war could strangle the world oil supply and escalate into war between nuclear-armed powers. The working class is coming face to face with the real possibility of a Third World War.

#### Russia humiliation in Ukraine risks ME conflict

Arman Mahmoudian, 6-3-2022, https://trendsresearch.org/insight/03-06-2022/, "Russia-Ukraine war: Implications for the RSII coalition," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Conclusion

In establishing a cost-benefit analysis (CBS) of the association between the depth of RSII members’ ties with Russia and the implications of the Russo-Ukrainian war for them, we should understand that as the importance of Russia for them grows, they are likely to lose more. For instance, Syria is heavily dependent on Moscow’s military support; thus, for Damascus, Russia is a “source of power,” and so a “conflicted Russia” poses a high level of threat for Syria. In this context, given Iraq’s friendly relations with both the West and Russia, Baghdad is in a safe spot, and Russia’s struggles will have a lesser impact on Iraqis since they have an “alternative source of support.” Iran is somewhere in the middle since Iran is not dependent on Syria, or Russia, or Iraq, for international support; thus, depending on Tehran’s future decisions, Iran could be in either “damage-control” or “limited-benefactor” mode.

To summarize, among non-Russian members of the Russia-Syria-Iraq-Iran security coalition, Iraq is the one who gains the most and loses the least; Syria is the one that yields the most and makes the least; and finally, Iran is somewhere in-between with an equal chance of “moderate” loss or gain. Regarding the future of the Russia-Syria-Iran-Iraq coalition, we could say that, to a significant extent, the future of the coalition depends on Russia’s position in the post-Ukraine war era. If, in the post-war era, the Kremlin seeks de-escalation with the West, we can safely argue that Moscow will try not to open a new frontline between itself and the West in the Middle East. However, an overconfident or humiliated Russia would likely choose the Middle East as a new battlefield to counter the West. An overconfident Russia would see the West as too fragile to confront its might, and a humiliated Russia would seek a place to avenge itself and reclaim its pride, and nowhere could be a better place than the Middle East, where the West has not historically had the upper hand.

#### Plan’s focus on Ukraine risks Iraq instability

Arman Mahmoudian, 6-3-2022, https://trendsresearch.org/insight/03-06-2022/, "Russia-Ukraine war: Implications for the RSII coalition," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Iraq

Among the members of RSII, Iraq is the one that should be the least concerned about the implications of the Russo-Ukrainian conflict. In fact, Iraq can be considered as one of the unintended benefactors of Russia’s war in Ukraine. The Russo-Ukrainian war has driven oil prices to their highest levels in almost a decade, with Iraq recording its highest revenue from oil exports in the last fifty years.[28] In addition, as the Russo-Ukrainian war is one of the factors that have impacted negotiations over the reimplementation of the JCPOA, the speculation around the return of Iran as Iraq’s traditional competitor in the energy market does not sound as promising as it used to. Thus, one can argue that, financially speaking, the situation could not be better for Iraq, since the future of both Iran, which holds 9.5 % of world oil reserves, and Russia, with 4.8 % of global reserves,[29] is no longer clear. This has provided Iraq with a great opportunity to widen its position in the energy market. Iraq’s strategic advantage has been further boosted by the decision of Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates not to increase their oil exports.[30]

Despite all the strategic financial advantages that Iraq has gained from Russia’s military operation in Ukraine, there is a potential negative side-effect that might strike Iraq: the probability that the West, and specifically the United States, will shift its attention from the Middle East to Ukraine and the rest of eastern Europe. The lack of Western attention might lead to Iraq’s neighbors, including Iran and Turkey, attempting to expand their influence over Iraq; in this context, one might argue that Turkey’s current aerial and artillery bombardment of Kurdish positions in northern Iraq is not purely fortuitous. In addition, the lack of the West’s engagement in Iraq might encourage terrorist groups such as ISIS to launch new attacks against the central government, which could destabilize Iraq. However, we also need to keep in mind that the probable decline in the role of Iran and Russia in the oil market could make Iraq invaluable to Western nations, so much so that they let Baghdad fall into anyone’s hands but the Iraqis.

## Aff Answers

### Thumpers

#### Ukraine war will thump for years into the future

RFE/RL's Ukrainian Service, 6-19-2022, https://www.rferl.org/a/ukraine-russia-syevyerodonetsk-belarus-arms-nato-putin-zelenskiy/31901661.html, "NATO Says Ukraine Fighting Could Last Years As Russians Pound Eastern Cities," RadioFreeEurope/RadioLiberty (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

NATO's secretary-general has warned that the war in Ukraine could go on for years and urged the supply of state-of-the-art weapons to Kyiv even if "costs are high," as Ukraine's allies sought to preempt any international "fatigue" nearly four months into Russia's unprovoked invasion.

The cautions came as Russia stepped up its offensives against Syevyerodonetsk and other eastern Ukrainian cities, and with the European Union readying for a recommendation next week to make Ukraine a candidate to join the bloc.

"We must prepare for the fact that it could take years. We must not let up in supporting Ukraine," NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg told Germany's Bild am Sonntag newspaper in comments published on June 19.

"Even if the costs are high, not only for military support, also because of rising energy and food prices."

Following his visit to Kyiv on June 18 to show support for Ukraine, British Prime Minister Boris Johnson wrote in London's Sunday Times that "time is the vital factor" and "everything will depend on whether Ukraine can strengthen its ability to defend its soil faster than Russia can renew its capacity to attack."

Johnson spoke of the need to avoid "Ukraine fatigue" from a conflict that has killed tens of thousands of Ukrainians and displaced more than 10 million others since Russian President Vladimir Putin ordered his troops across the border on February 24.

Syevyerodonetsk, the focus of Russia’s offensive to capture full control of the eastern Ukrainian region of Luhansk, remained under heavy artillery fire on June 19, as did the sister city of Lysychansk, just across the Severskiy Donets River.

The Ukrainian General Staff said early on June 19 that Russian troops eere concentrating their main efforts in the direction of Syevyerodonetsk and Bakhmut.

The Russian Defense Ministry said it had taken control of Metyolkine, a town about 6 kilometers southeast of Syevyerodonetsk that had a population of about 800 before the war. TASS reported that many Ukrainian fighters had surrendered there.

Ukraine's military said Russia had "partial success" in the area, but Serhiy Hayday, the military governor of Luhansk, told Ukrainian television that the Russians' claims that they control Syevyerodonetsk are false.

"They control the main part of the town but not the whole town," he said, adding that the fighting made evacuations from the city impossible.

Despite heavy shelling of Syevyerodonestk's twin city, Lysychansk, it was possible to evacuate 19 people from there, Hayday said.

"Today, 19 residents of Lysychansk have already exhaled with relief and are in a place where shells do not fly overhead," Hayday said on Telegram.

The British Defense Ministry said in an intelligence update on June 19 that there was "little change in the front line" in recent days in the so-called Syevyerodonetsk pocket where Russian forces are hoping to encircle Ukraine's defenders.

But the ministry also warned that Ukrainian and Russian combat units "committed to intense combat in the Donbas" are probably suffering "variable morale," citing information from U.K. intelligence services.

Ukrainian and Western intelligence have pointed for months to signs of poor morale and even fragging among invading Russian soldiers since the February 24 invasion began.

But the British statement is among the strongest indications so far of morale problems among Ukrainians, who mobilized military and civilian defenders to resist the Russians.

"Ukrainian forces have likely suffered desertions in recent weeks," the Defense Ministry said in its latest intelligence update on Ukraine. "Russian morale highly likely remains especially troubled. Cases of whole Russian units refusing orders and armed stand-offs between officers and their troops continue to occur."

Reliable casualty estimates from either side have been difficult to come by.

The Ukrainian side suggests more than 30,000 Russian soldiers have been killed, although Western intelligence has suggested the number is considerably lower.

The Ukrainian side has not said how many of its troops or other defenders have died, although Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskiy recently suggested as many as 100 Ukrainian soldiers are being killed every day.

#### NATO expansion to Finland/Sweden thumps

Alexander Korolev, 2-24-2022, U-NSW Senior Lecturer in Politics and International Relations at the University of New South Wales. He is currently completing a book manuscript on the theory of strategic alignments with special reference to the China-Russia alignment. https://iai.tv/articles/only-neutrality-can-save-the-geopolitical-deadlock-auid-2140, "," IAI TV - Changing how the world thinks (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Finally, the expansion of NATO into Sweden and Finland has poignantly demonstrated that despite the war, Ukraine remains a third-rank citizen in the West. Sweden and Finland were warmly welcomed by NATO even before they formally applied. Ukraine, in turn, despite all its efforts to join NATO, was designated by Boris Johnson on 6 March 2022 as the country that “had no serious prospects of NATO membership in the near future.” This was echoed, on 11 March 2022, by Josep Borrell, who reflectively admitted with regards to Ukraine’s NATO membership that “it’s a mistake to make promises that you can’t keep.”

The limits of the West’s support of Ukraine are crystal clear to Putin and the rest of the world. Regardless of what Russia does in Ukraine, there will be no NATO membership and no collective security guarantees for Ukraine. Moreover, this round of NATO expansion brings the “enemy” to the gate of Russia and corroborates Putin’s besieged-fortress ideology. Thus, Putin has managed to create the world he has been warning Russians and Russia’s allies about: the West is indeed fully out to encircle Russia. This self-fulfilling prophecy shores up Putin’s rhetoric within Russia and signals to China that the West does pose a danger to Russia and is more interested in harming Russia’s geopolitical interests than helping Ukraine. This recognition strengthens China-Russia alignment which will further buttress Russia’s capacity to carry on in Ukraine.

#### Western sanctions thump

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

In response to the invasion of Ukraine, the West has imposed stinging sanctions, disrupting the Russian economy and forcing the Kremlin to burn through its financial reserves. Major Russian banks have been disconnected from SWIFT, the international system that facilitates financial transactions, while some oligarchs have been sanctioned. Many allies and partners have provided massive financial and material aid—in the form of funding, as well as anti-tank and air-defense systems and other military equipment—to bolster Ukrainian resistance. This assistance has helped to stiffen an already stout Ukrainian defense, which has inflicted heavy losses on the Russian military. Vladimir Putin now faces the real possibility of a stalled offensive, or even outright defeat.

#### Russian failure in Ukraine thumps

Mohammed Cherkaoui, 6-26-2022, GMU professor of Conflict Resolution and Diplomacy at George Mason University in Washington and Joaan Bin Jassim Academy for Defence Studies in Doha. https://studies.aljazeera.net/en/analyses/russia-nato-four-political-variants-under-review, "Russia-NATO: Four Political Variants under Review," Al Jazeera Center for Studies (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Balance of power

Since the war erupted in Ukraine, there has been increasing caution in EU and NATO headquarters in Brussels about how to deal best with the Kremlin’s strategy and to avoid any armed confrontation in eastern Europe. Military historian Rick Atkinson conceives the new order of battle in Europe as very fluid. He points out, “in less than three months, the strategic landscape has changed profoundly — invigorating a NATO military alliance that had seemed nearly moribund, undermining if not neutering Russian imperial ambitions, and reasserting American leadership in a robust coalition of like-minded liberal democracies.” (27)

Henry Kissinger, former U.S. secretary of state and so-called ‘master of grand strategy’ said at a Financial Times forum held in June 2022, “We are now living in a totally new era.” He also argued that Putin “obviously miscalculated Russia’s capabilities to sustain a major enterprise — and when the time comes for settlement … we are not going back to the previous relationship but to a position for Russia that will be different because of this — and not because we demanded it but because they produced it.” (28)

#### Thump: Ukraine military aid

George Allison, 6-27-2022, https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/nato-increases-high-alert-force-from-40000-to-300000-troops/, "NATO increases high alert force from 40,000 to 300,000 troops," UK Defence Journal (ermo/sms, Acc:7-1-2022)

The Ukrainian government and people continue to resist Russia’s brutal war of aggression. Their courage and commitment are an inspiration. And I welcome that President Zelenskyy will join us at the NATO Summit. NATO and Allies have provided substantial support to Ukraine since Russia’s illegal annexation of Crimea in 2014. Including with military and financial aid. And training for tens of thousands of Ukrainian forces. All of this is making a difference on the battlefield every day. And since the invasion in February, Allies have stepped up even more. With billions of euros’ worth of military, financial, and humanitarian assistance. At the Summit, we will agree a strengthened Comprehensive Assistance Package for Ukraine. This will include substantial deliveries of support. In areas like secure communications, anti-drone systems, and fuel. Over the longer term, we will help Ukraine transition from Soviet-era military equipment, to modern NATO equipment. And further strengthen its defence and security institutions. At the Summit, we will also take decisions to continue adapting NATO.”

#### Thump: NATO RRF expansion

George Allison, 6-27-2022, https://ukdefencejournal.org.uk/nato-increases-high-alert-force-from-40000-to-300000-troops/, "NATO increases high alert force from 40,000 to 300,000 troops," UK Defence Journal (ermo/sms, Acc:7-1-2022)

The almost eight times increase in NATO Response Force troops is due to the threat posed by Russia, say the Alliance.

For clarity, the NATO Response Force is a highly ready and technologically advanced multinational combat force made up of land, air, maritime and Special Operations Forces components that the Alliance can deploy quickly, wherever needed.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg gave a speech today ahead of a meeting in Madrid amongst NATO allies set to adopt a new strategy for the Alliance. The strategy reportedly describes Moscow as a direct threat.

Stoltenberg said:

“Our NATO Summit in Madrid this week will be transformative. With many important decisions. Including on a new Strategic Concept for a new security reality. A fundamental shift in NATO’s deterrence and defence. And support to Ukraine now, and for the future.

Our new Concept will guide us in an era of strategic competition. I expect it will make clear that Allies consider Russia as the most significant and direct threat to our security. It will address China for the first time. And the challenges that Beijing poses to our security, interests, and values. It will also cover our evolving approach to a number of other threats and challenges. Including terrorism, cyber, and hybrid. At the Summit, we will strengthen our forward defences.

We will enhance our battlegroups in the eastern part of the Alliance up to brigade-levels. We will transform the NATO Response Force. And increase the number of our high readiness forces to well over 300,000.

We will also boost our ability to reinforce in crisis and conflict.Including with:

More pre-positioned equipment, and stockpiles of military supplies.

More forward-deployed capabilities, like air defence.

Strengthened command and control.

And upgraded defence plans, with forces pre-assigned to defend specific Allies.

These troops will exercise together with home defence forces.

And they will become familiar with local terrain, facilities, and our new pre-positioned stocks. So that they can respond smoothly and swiftly to any emergency. Together, this constitutes the biggest overhaul of our collective deterrence and defence since the Cold War. And to do this, we will need to invest more. Today, we are releasing new defence spending figures. They show that 2022 will be the eighth consecutive year of increases across European Allies and Canada. By the end of the year, they will have invested well over 350 billion US dollars extra since we agreed our defence investment pledge in 2014. Nine Allies now reach – or exceed – the 2% target. Nineteen Allies have clear plans to reach it by 2024. And an additional five have concrete commitments to meet it thereafter. Two percent is increasingly considered a floor, not a ceiling. We will also agree to invest more together in NATO. For the benefit of our security.

### Turn – Plan Helps Ukraine

#### NATO unity checks Ukraine escalation

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Preventing and controlling escalation

What can NATO and the European Union do to prevent Russia from escalating the conflict to unacceptable levels? What follows are a few principles to guide NATO’s assessment of preventing and avoiding escalation.

Keep Ukraine in the fight. The first, and most immediate, curative is to keep Ukraine in the war. This means continued financial assistance, shipments of lethal aid, and real-time intelligence sharing, as well as humanitarian assistance and help with absorption and resettlement of refugees. The United States and Europe have shown unity and concerted action in responding swiftly to Russian aggression in Ukraine and this must continue, even as Putin seeks to find and drive wedges between transatlantic allies and partners. In this struggle, a coherent narrative, shared and articulated in common, will be critical.

In this regard, continuous references to the danger of escalation to “World War III” and a steady drumbeat of measures not to be taken can only serve to reassure Putin that he has a free hand in Ukraine. A degree of strategic ambiguity and the possibility of US and NATO intervention should he go too far can be helpful in moderating Russian excesses and controlling escalation. An “all measures on the table” approach will force Russian planners to consider, and prepare for, multiple response scenarios, complicating resource allocation and inducing uncertainty. While deterrence is more art than science, signaling to one’s opponent that one is too frightened to engage is more likely to encourage than to deter.

The most effective way to prevent spillover onto NATO territory and other forms of future Russian aggression is to help defeat Russian forces in the field inside Ukraine. Supplying Ukraine with food, fuel, spare parts, and modern equipment is the best way to do that, while still avoiding direct intervention by NATO. This means combat aircraft, main battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, self-propelled and rocket artillery, mobile air defense, secure radios, unmanned aerial vehicles, target-acquisition radars, spare parts, and ammunition, including precision-guided munitions. Many of these combat systems exist in storage in great numbers in the United States and in Europe. The Ukrainian military has shown remarkable versatility in adapting to unfamiliar systems such as the Javelin and Stinger, but exportable training packages, and even training sites in Europe for selected specialists, also warrant consideration.

#### Only resilience and persistence can check Putin in Ukraine

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Use economic tools as a primary “offensive” weapon. As the military campaign progresses, sanctions will continue to strangle the Russian economy. This pressure must continue—and, if possible, intensify—in order to force Russia, not just to the negotiating table, but to withdraw altogether from Ukrainian territory. To date, not all Russian banks have been banned from SWIFT, and many oligarchs remain unsanctioned. Though painful and difficult, weaning Europe from Russian energy, divesting from Russian businesses, and closing European markets are powerful weapons the EU can wield in its own right. (While 37 percent of Russian trade is with Europe, only 4 percent of the EU’s goods exports go to Russia.) Today, Russian energy remains exempt from EU sanctions. Developing alternate sources of energy, in particular, will take time and investment, but continued reliance on Russian oil and natural gas can only enable Putin to continue to finance the war in Ukraine.

In March 2022, the EU imposed its fourth tranche of trade sanctions on Russia, tightening export restrictions on dual-use technologies, expanding the list of sanctioned persons related to defense industries; imposing further trade restrictions for steel, iron, and luxury goods; and prohibiting transactions with specific state-owned enterprises. The challenge now will be to maintain the full range of sanctions until they bear fruit. Global food shortages, rising energy prices, and scarcities among certain commodities will challenge the sanctions regime. Much depends on the persistence and resolve of Western leaders.

Properly understood, comprehensive economic sanctions against Russia—what the French finance minister has called “total economic and financial war on Russia”—can be a major tool, denying Putin the financial resources to carry on the war and generating internal pressures on elites that could lead to his removal. By themselves, however, they will probably not end the war. China, Brazil, and India remain open markets and suppliers, if not active supporters, while Hungary and Serbia retain close ties. As former Deputy National Security Adviser General Rick Waddell has pointed out to the author, “An economy that is self-sufficient in energy and food takes a lot of killing.” In concert with diplomacy, aggressive information operations, and the military instrument of power, sanctions can be a vital component of an overall strategy to control and limit escalation and drive conflict termination by draining Russia of the financial resources it needs to carry on the war.

#### Only solidification solves Ukraine and avoids Russian expansionism

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Maintain unity on the diplomatic front. In the midst of aggressive warfare, diplomacy may not capture the headlines. But, it must remain in play, above all because political objectives in the end must govern what happens on the battlefield. Here there are minefields. NATO and the EU may be tempted to intervene in negotiations and offer solutions—“off ramps” is au courant—to more quickly achieve a cessation of hostilities. These could take the form of sanctions relief and acknowledgement of Russian sovereignty over parts of Ukraine in exchange for “peace.” This would be a fatal error.

Practitioners of realpolitik may minimize Zelenskyy’s emphasis on shared values and the ongoing contest between democracy and autocracy, but his citizenry and millions in Europe and the United States won’t. Despite the leverage the West has over Ukraine as its storehouse and quartermaster, the Ukrainian people will decide “how this ends.” The political endgame—the definition of “victory”—must reflect outcomes they deem worthy of the enormous sacrifices they have made. The trap here is that Putin will not give up his aspirations if allowed to keep some of his gains, restore his finances, rebuild his forces, and try again.

The West has an opportunity to rule out that future altogether. That outcome rests on continued pressure, assistance to Ukraine, a resolute and united front, and the willingness to confront Russia decisively should Putin expand the conflict. Western diplomacy must be based on more than “stopping the fighting.” The United States and its allies must see through and beyond the endgame to a stable and lasting peace. That means the comprehensive defeat of the Russian military in Ukraine, before the conflict metastasizes further and spreads into Europe and beyond.

Throughout, diplomacy should leverage the strong, worldwide opposition to Russian aggression—as expressed in the UN General Assembly’s overwhelming vote of March 2—in all international forums. Traditional neutrals such as Sweden, Finland, and Austria have joined in strongly condemning Putin’s actions and have a growing voice. Building and sustaining this coalition should remain a top diplomatic priority.

#### Military aid in Ukraine checks Russia

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

The most effective way to prevent spillover onto NATO territory and other forms of future Russian aggression is to help defeat Russian forces in the field inside Ukraine. Supplying Ukraine with food, fuel, spare parts, and modern equipment is the best way to do that, while still avoiding direct intervention by NATO. This means combat aircraft, main battle tanks, infantry fighting vehicles, self-propelled and rocket artillery, mobile air defense, secure radios, unmanned aerial vehicles, target-acquisition radars, spare parts, and ammunition, including precision-guided munitions. Many of these combat systems exist in storage in great numbers in the United States and in Europe. The Ukrainian military has shown remarkable versatility in adapting to unfamiliar systems such as the Javelin and Stinger, but exportable training packages, and even training sites in Europe for selected specialists, also warrant consideration.

### Ukraine Impact - LIO

#### Deterrence in shadow of Ukraine is the only hope for LIO

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Conclusion

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is the most dangerous event to occur in Europe since the end of the Second World War. In its potential for enormous casualties, destruction on an epic scale, and escalation to unthinkable extremes, it demands the attention and considered action of NATO, the European Union, and the whole world. No one can see clearly exactly how the crisis will play out. This “strange voyage,” in Winston Churchill’s words, is a journey into the unknown, as all wars are. The best the West can do is prepare for the worst, keep its nerve, and employ all its resources when its vital interests and most cherished values are attacked. Things are very close to that stage now. At stake is an international order founded on something other than brute force, imperial ambition, and autocratic self-help. A Russian victory in Ukraine, even at great cost, places a vengeful Putin on Europe’s doorstep, his ambitions partially achieved but still unrealized. The next blow will fall on NATO’s eastern flank. Now is the time to ensure that never happens.

**Decline ensures transition wars, not peaceful multilateralism---the US could launch a pre-emptive attack or China could strike first**

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Underlying these arguments for an inevitable war between the two superpowers is PTT. PTT originally formulated by Organski (1958) posits that **war is likely** when the power of the dominant state in the international system (i.e. hegemon) is **declining** and that a dissatisfied rising challenger **substantially reduces the power gap between the hegemon and itself**. Unlike balance of power theory, PTT argues that the war is most likely when there is near power parity between a dominant state and a rising and dissatisfied challenger (Organski and Kugler, 1980, pp. 19-20)[5]. A rising power here is generally dissatisfied with the existing international order and **initiates war against a declining hegemon in order to impose orders that are more favorable to itself** (Organski 1958, pp. 364-367). Layne (2018, p. 110) put these power transition dynamics quite succinctly as follows: “Over time, however, the relative power of states changes, and eventually the international order no longer reflects the actual distribution of power between or among the leading Great Powers. When that happens, the legitimacy of the prevailing order is called into question, and it will be challenged by the rising power(s).” And when the balance of power between a dominant state and a rising challenger changes sufficiently, a new order replaces an old one typically **by a hegemonic war** (2018, p. 104). Paying close attention to the **growing Sino–US competition** over hegemony in the twenty-first century, therefore, Shirk (2007, p. 4), China specialist, argues that “History teaches us that rising powers are likely to provoke war.” On the other hand, scholars like Gilpin (1981) contend that the power transition war between great powers is likely to occur when a hegemonic state whose power is declining due to imperial overstretch[6] views “**preventive war as the most attractive means of eliminating the threat** posed by challengers” (Ned Lebow and Valentino, 2009, p. 391), although they do acknowledge that there might be some “ways to prolong the period of its power preponderance vis-à-vis the rising challenger, so that the rapidly rising power will not dare to challenge the hegemonic leadership” (Kim and Gates, 2015, p. 221). In this case, the initiator of war is a declining hegemon, rather than a rising challenger. The declining hegemon who fears a rising challenger’s overtaking its power in the near future **sees war as a better option** than other options of maintaining its hegemony such as reducing its commitments abroad and appeasing a rising challenger.

### Ukraine Impact - Genocide

#### Ukraine genocide will force NATO intervention

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If NATO intervenes, do it decisively. Several European nations, including Poland, Denmark, and Belgium, are considering some form of “peacekeeping” intervention in Ukraine, while calls for a no-fly zone are mounting as the civilian death toll rises. This suggests a critical mass of support may be forming for outside intervention under certain circumstances. Strong material and financial aid may enable Ukraine to hold on, and even advance to retake occupied territory, but Russia remains a far larger and stronger opponent. If the logic that it is better to defeat Putin in Ukraine than on NATO territory is sound, intervention to prevent the fall of Ukraine or its dismemberment must be considered. The prospect of actual genocide of Ukrainian civilians, or use of weapons of mass destruction, might also trigger NATO intervention.

### Ukraine Impact – Asia Pivot

#### Weakening Russia in Ukraine enables Asia Pivot

Marc De Vore, 6-15-2022, School of International Relations - Senior Lecturer https://ucigcc.org/news/what-ukraine-is-teaching-us-about-geoeconomics/, "What Ukraine Is Teaching Us About Geoeconomics," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:7-1-2022)

Another difference is that this is the first conflict involving quasi-alliances. NATO and the EU are not participants in the war, but they’re clearly involved and not neutral. Russia has a series of partnerships— the cooperative treaty organization and its strategic partnership with China—which are also in play.

One of the questions this war raises is: what does the war’s outcome mean for the U.S. pivot toward Asia? And I think that raises two other questions. One is: how diminished will Russia be at the end? Since Barack Obama, the U.S. has been trying to pivot towards Asia because China is clearly the larger and more significant long-term competitor. But Vladimir Putin is sticking around Eastern Europe and kicking the Western order in the shins. That has made it very difficult to pivot towards Asia. On the other hand, if this war ends with Russia being a crippled power, then, in that sense, pivoting towards Asia is going to be much were easier if what one is dealing with in Europe is a very weakened Vladimir Putin with a decrepit military that can’t reconstitute itself.

### Ukraine Impact - Food

#### Ukraine puts food security on brink

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Poorer countries are currently facing the prospect of a major food crisis. While much attention has been paid to the Russian blockade of Ukrainian ports, which disrupts supplies, even if the ports become operational again the problem will remain. First, rising energy prices are already translating to higher transportation costs of basic goods, driving up the prices of basic foodstuffs. Second, Ukraine and Russia are major exporters of basic foodstuffs—together they supply almost 29% of the world’s exports of wheat brands, 20% of corn, and 80% of sunflower oil. While the Western economies have enough margins to address these rising prices, the situation in the poorer corners of the world is different—as indicated by the Economist front page showing human skulls in a sheaf of grain. According to David Beasley, the executive director of the UN World Food Programme, 50% of the wheat supplied by the organization was coming from Ukraine. Russia is also a prime exporter of indispensable ingredients in fertilizers—potash and phosphate. When Ukrainian farmers are preoccupied with defending their land in the beginning of the seeding season, and when Russian farmers cannot be paid due to the exclusion of Russia from the SWIFT system, rising food prices threaten to bring more instability into already unstable countries. Just a few weeks into the conflict and the spiraling prices of food and other basic commodities ignited protests and rallies in Iraq and Morocco. According to the Financial Times, “a jump in grain prices in 2009-10 is regarded as one of the triggers of the Arab Spring in the Middle East.” The looming global food crisis threatens to have yet more destructive consequences, including more conflicts and more refugees.

Many in the West have praised the decisiveness of the EU’s effort to protect Ukrainian refugees escaping the war. While the unprecedented deal—that grants Ukrainians instant rights to live and work within the EU—is more than welcome in itself, many human rights groups and organizations have been clamoring that it demonstrates the EU’s “double standards” in comparison to the 2015 refugee crisis. “The Ukraine refugee crisis,” argues the Global Detention Project (GDP), a Geneva-based nonprofit organization, “presents Europe with . . . a critical moment of reflection: Can the peoples of Europe overcome their widespread racism and animosity and embrace the universalist spirit of the 1951 Refugee Conventions?” This question might become pivotal once food shortages start to affect societies in the Middle East and North Africa. This may expose not only the West’s moral bias but also systemic weaknesses of contemporary institutions that have shaped globalization processes during the last decades, such as migration regimes.

### Ukraine Impact - Economy

#### Ukraine war risks global supply chain collapse

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Western societies and economies will have to address these urgent sociopolitical challenges, which may arrive in tandem with other threats to the global order. The disruption caused by the war to the global economic model led Larry Fink, the chief executive of BlackRock and one of the world’s leading hedge fund investors, to write that “the Russian invasion of Ukraine has put an end to the globalization we have experienced over the last three decades.” Fink is worried about two further expected shockwaves. First, the globalized economy is amidst a supply chain crisis, which the war in Ukraine is aggravating further. Since the start of the coronavirus pandemic, shippers have tried to bypass the uncertainty of fraught container shipping by turning to rail transport as an alternative route for the Asia–Europe trade. Rail operators ran more than 1,200 freight trains per month between China and Europe, transiting through Russia, Ukraine, and Belarus, and transporting almost 1.5 million containers. The disruption caused by the blocking of land routes may result in more permanent and painful retreat by manufacturers from reliance on global supply chains. Second, the war in Ukraine may also disrupt technological innovation. For example, much of the world’s neon, which is crucial for the production of computer chips, originates in Russia, and 50% of this is purified in Ukraine. The interruption to supply chains and possible deficit of microchips are daunting scenarios for global economic development. But they may also come as a natural and much needed trend to cool down a radically decentralized, overcomplicated, and hence venerable global system of trade.

#### Decline cascades – nuclear war.

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Economic stressors, in transcendent VUCA fashion, may also induce radical geopolitical realignments. Bullions now carry more weight than NATO’s security guarantees in Eastern Europe. After Poland repatriated 100 tons of gold from the Bank of England in 2019, Slovakia, Serbia and Hungary quickly followed suit.

According to former Slovak Premier Robert Fico, this erosion in regional trust was based on historical precedents – in particular the 1938 Munich Agreement which ceded Czechoslovakia’s Sudetenland to Nazi Germany. As Fico reiterated (Dudik & Tomek, 2019):

“You can hardly trust even the closest allies after the Munich Agreement… I guarantee that if something happens, we won’t see a single gram of this (offshore-held) gold. Let’s do it (repatriation) as quickly as possible.” (Parenthesis added by author).

President Aleksandar Vucic of Serbia (a non-NATO nation) justified his central bank’s gold-repatriation program by hinting at economic headwinds ahead: “We see in which direction the crisis in the world is moving” (Dudik & Tomek, 2019). Indeed, with two global Titanics – the United States and China – set on a collision course with a quadrillions-denominated iceberg in the middle, and a viral outbreak on its tip, the seismic ripples will be felt far, wide and for a considerable period.

A reality check is nonetheless needed here: Can additional bullions realistically circumvallate the economies of 80 million plus peoples in these Eastern European nations, worth a collective $1.8 trillion by purchasing power parity? Gold however is a potent psychological symbol as it represents national sovereignty and economic reassurance in a potentially hyperinflationary world. The portents are clear: The current global economic system will be weakened by rising nationalism and autarkic demands. Much uncertainty remains ahead. Mauldin (2018) proposes the introduction of Old Testament-style debt jubilees to facilitate gradual national recoveries. The World Economic Forum, on the other hand, has long proposed a “Great Reset” by 2030; a socialist utopia where “you’ll own nothing and you’ll be happy” (WEF, 2016).

In the final analysis, COVID-19 is not the root cause of the current global economic turmoil; it is merely an accelerant to a burning house of cards that was left smouldering since the 2008 Great Recession (Maavak, 2020a). We also see how the four main pillars of systems thinking (diversity, interconnectivity, interactivity and “adaptivity”) form the mise en scene in a VUCA decade.

ENVIRONMENTAL

What happens to the environment when our economies implode? Think of a debt-laden workforce at sensitive nuclear and chemical plants, along with a concomitant surge in industrial accidents? Economic stressors, workforce demoralization and rampant profiteering – rather than manmade climate change – arguably pose the biggest threats to the environment. In a WEF report, Buehler et al (2017) made the following pre-COVID-19 observation:

The ILO estimates that the annual cost to the global economy from accidents and work-related diseases alone is a staggering $3 trillion. Moreover, a recent report suggests the world’s 3.2 billion workers are increasingly unwell, with the vast majority facing significant economic insecurity: 77% work in part-time, temporary, “vulnerable” or unpaid jobs.

Shouldn’t this phenomenon be better categorized as a societal or economic risk rather than an environmental one? In line with the systems thinking approach, however, global risks can no longer be boxed into a taxonomical silo. Frazzled workforces may precipitate another Bhopal (1984), Chernobyl (1986), Deepwater Horizon (2010) or Flint water crisis (2014). These disasters were notably not the result of manmade climate change. Neither was the Fukushima nuclear disaster (2011) nor the Indian Ocean tsunami (2004). Indeed, the combustion of a long-overlooked cargo of 2,750 tonnes of ammonium nitrate had nearly levelled the city of Beirut, Lebanon, on Aug 4 2020. The explosion left 204 dead; 7,500 injured; US$15 billion in property damages; and an estimated 300,000 people homeless (Urbina, 2020). The environmental costs have yet to be adequately tabulated.

Environmental disasters are more attributable to Black Swan events, systems breakdowns and corporate greed rather than to mundane human activity.

Our JIT world aggravates the cascading potential of risks (Korowicz, 2012). Production and delivery delays, caused by the COVID-19 outbreak, will eventually require industrial overcompensation. This will further stress senior executives, workers, machines and a variety of computerized systems. The trickle-down effects will likely include substandard products, contaminated food and a general lowering in health and safety standards (Maavak, 2019a). Unpaid or demoralized sanitation workers may also resort to indiscriminate waste dumping. Many cities across the United States (and elsewhere in the world) are no longer recycling wastes due to prohibitive costs in the global corona-economy (Liacko, 2021).

Even in good times, strict protocols on waste disposals were routinely ignored. While Sweden championed the global climate change narrative, its clothing flagship H&M was busy covering up toxic effluences disgorged by vendors along the Citarum River in Java, Indonesia. As a result, countless children among 14 million Indonesians straddling the “world’s most polluted river” began to suffer from dermatitis, intestinal problems, developmental disorders, renal failure, chronic bronchitis and cancer (DW, 2020). It is also in cauldrons like the Citarum River where pathogens may mutate with emergent ramifications.

On an equally alarming note, depressed economic conditions have traditionally provided a waste disposal boon for organized crime elements. Throughout 1980s, the Calabriabased ‘Ndrangheta mafia – in collusion with governments in Europe and North America – began to dump radioactive wastes along the coast of Somalia. Reeling from pollution and revenue loss, Somali fisherman eventually resorted to mass piracy (Knaup, 2008).

The coast of Somalia is now a maritime hotspot, and exemplifies an entwined form of economic-environmental-geopolitical-societal emergence. In a VUCA world, indiscriminate waste dumping can unexpectedly morph into a Black Hawk Down incident. The laws of unintended consequences are governed by actors, interconnections, interactions and adaptations in a system under study – as outlined in the methodology section.

Environmentally-devastating industrial sabotages – whether by disgruntled workers, industrial competitors, ideological maniacs or terrorist groups – cannot be discounted in a VUCA world. Immiserated societies, in stark defiance of climate change diktats, may resort to dirty coal plants and wood stoves for survival. Interlinked ecosystems, particularly water resources, may be hijacked by nationalist sentiments. The environmental fallouts of critical infrastructure (CI) breakdowns loom like a Sword of Damocles over this decade.

GEOPOLITICAL

The primary catalyst behind WWII was the Great Depression. Since history often repeats itself, expect familiar bogeymen to reappear in societies roiling with impoverishment and ideological clefts. Anti-Semitism – a societal risk on its own – may reach alarming proportions in the West (Reuters, 2019), possibly forcing Israel to undertake reprisal operations inside allied nations. If that happens, how will affected nations react? Will security resources be reallocated to protect certain minorities (or the Top 1%) while larger segments of society are exposed to restive forces? Balloon effects like these present a classic VUCA problematic.

Contemporary geopolitical risks include a possible Iran-Israel war; US-China military confrontation over Taiwan or the South China Sea; North Korean proliferation of nuclear and missile technologies; an India-Pakistan nuclear war; an Iranian closure of the Straits of Hormuz; fundamentalist-driven implosion in the Islamic world; or a nuclear confrontation between NATO and Russia. Fears that the Jan 3 2020 assassination of Iranian Maj. Gen. Qasem Soleimani might lead to WWIII were grossly overblown. From a systems perspective, the killing of Soleimani did not fundamentally change the actor-interconnection-interaction adaptivity equation in the Middle East. Soleimani was simply a cog who got replaced.

### Ukraine Impact - Democracy

#### Russia losing in Ukraine – will take down the authoritarian model

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I want to add just one thing, which is that, if this war goes on, as it looks like it will, Russia’s economy could start to collapse for lack of spare parts. The demonstration value of that collapse might be that, in two or three years, people will look back and say: this was a war that was won by the sanctions –an unprecedented event.

Granted, there was a period in between the World Wars where trade embargoes were strong, but trade in intermediate goods, and financial markets make economies more interlinked now, and more vulnerable. We’re in a world where the hundred designers of chip manufacturing facilities in Taiwan are critical to global supply chains. Russia is no longer the simple command economy that the neo-Stalinists want to make great again. Its consumers use imported smartphones and cars, full of chips. Its military is also dependent on imported parts and components.

People are going to look back and say: Wow, the authoritarians really killed that place, didn’t they? It was an economy with remarkable human capital and now it’s a dinosaur, like North Korea. I think that’s going to make countries reconsider not just their economic models, but also the models of authoritarian regimes, because of the effect on human capital. Refugees from Russia who you see now everywhere, not just in Europe, but also in Israel, are highly educated, angry, and disappointed people whose lives fell apart. Just like that. They thought that they could deal with the regime but now that hope is gone. They’re very, very talented people. The demonstration value of this authoritarian debacle may end up being the most important part.

#### Ukraine outcome controls trajectory of global democracy

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Both nations have suffered severe losses and need to regenerate military strength. The winner will be the one who is quickest to reconstitute its combat forces at the tactical level and whose leader best motivates his country to fight and manages to enlarge and equip his armed forces, and the logistics to sustain those forces, at the strategic level.

Twenty-first century Russia is using twentieth-century weapons to fight a nineteenth-century war of attrition, combined with eighteenth-century pillaging. Currently, Russia’s numerical advantage in Donbas allows it to grind out a slow advance toward a pointless objective. Even if Russian forces advance to the administrative borders of both oblasts, it will not end the war as long as Ukraine still has the will to fight and the means to do so. If Putin plans to declare victory once his army has cleared Ukraine out of Donbas, he is building on sand. Unlike Georgia or Moldova, Ukraine has the resources and international support to refuse to accept a “frozen conflict.” Instead, the incoming tide of a rebuilt and expanded Ukrainian army will eventually wash those gains away—be it months or years from now.

For a short-lived propaganda victory in Donbas, Putin is destroying the Russian army. If that army revolts in self-defense or collapses under Ukrainian counterattacks, Putin will face the same fate as other Russian rulers who have lost wars. Can the gap between Russian war aims and military capabilities be closed with nuclear weapons? In theory, possibly—but in practice, such an outcome is unlikely. There is no silver bullet to overturn poor strategy, leadership, tactics, and logistics and a lack of will in the face of a motivated opponent.

Despite the prediction two decades ago by political scientist Samuel Huntington that future conflicts would be clashes between different cultural civilizations, we are seeing a clash within a cultural civilization—Orthodox civilization—whose cultural boundaries have been formed by its Eastern Orthodox confession, Byzantine heritage, and Slavic ancestry and languages.[33] This war between the world’s two largest Orthodox states is about more than Ukraine’s ability to join NATO or the European Union. It’s also a fight between two ideas of how people should be governed. One side believes it should be by the decree of the powerful and the other by the consent of the governed. One believes it is entitled to a sphere of influence; the other believes it is entitled to chart its own political future.

A Russian victory in this conflict could serve as a template or inspiration for other revisionist or ideological powers. A Ukrainian victory would do the same for those societies struggling with the challenges of democracy. On the broadest of scales, that is what this war is about.

### Nuclear Deterrence Turn

#### NATO credibility is vital to effective nuclear deterrence

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Take an unambiguous stance on nuclear policy. To relieve the threat of a Russian first-use nuclear strike and regain freedom of action, the United States and NATO must return to core deterrence principles. As it has for many decades, nuclear deterrence rests on both capability and credibility. NATO nuclear forces, though much reduced since the Cold War (especially with respect to theater nuclear systems) are redundant, survivable, and absolutely capable of destroying Russia from end to end. NATO’s credibility, on the other hand, is constantly undermined when leaders publicly express palpable fears that Putin will employ his nuclear arsenal, for unclear reasons and in unclear ways, and that they must at all costs avoid pushing him into a corner. A resolve not to be bullied is essential. Deterrence works best when leaders are direct, unambiguous, resolute, and calm, as John Kennedy was during the Cuban Missile Crisis. As President Emmanuel Macron reminded his public recently, the West has nuclear weapons, too.

### Resolve Turn

#### Only firm resolve deters Putin – reasoning like the DA guts deterrence

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Bolster forward presence. As a hedge against further Russian aggression and to reassure allies, the US deployed two additional heavy brigades to Poland in February and early March, along with an airborne brigade, bringing the US rotational “heel-to-toe” brigade there to divisional strength. US divisional and corps-level headquarters were also sent. The US 2nd Cavalry Regiment based in Germany (actually a Stryker brigade) was relocated to Romania at the same time. Additional air units and ground troops from a number of allies have also been deployed to NATO’s eastern flank, while the forty-thousand-soldier NATO Response Force (NRF) has been alerted for the first time in its history.

Putin’s rhetoric and aggressive disinformation and subversion efforts have, for years, targeted the Baltic States, which stand between Kaliningrad and contiguous Russia and extend almost to the suburbs of St. Petersburg. To forestall future aggression and cement firm deterrence, these forces should remain in eastern Europe at least for the near term (i.e., 3–5 years). As the campaign in Ukraine unfolds, Putin should understand clearly that NATO is postured to respond strongly to further escalation. For many years, policymakers have argued strenuously against providing the Baltic States, and NATO’s eastern flank in general, with an adequate defense for fear of “provoking” Russia and to “maintain Alliance unity.” Measures to build up Ukraine’s defensive capacity were resisted for the same reasons; the Barack Obama administration opposed lethal aid, even after the invasions of Crimea and the Donbas, while the Donald Trump administration provided only a trickle. The invasion of Ukraine has demonstrated the pitfalls of this thinking. Putin’s threats were intended to keep his neighbors weak, but recent events have proven that it is the perception of weakness, not strength, that provokes him most. Accordingly, a firm defense from the borders of Finnmark to the Black Sea can prevent spillover or regional escalation, communicate resolve, and reassure host-nation publics that the conflict in Ukraine will not land on their doorstep. This is under way with the recent announcement that NATO battlegroups will be posted in Romania, Bulgaria, Hungary, and Slovakia. Meanwhile, Germany, the United Kingdom (UK), Denmark, and others have also pledged to increase their forces in the Baltic States.

To further strengthen deterrence and head off escalation, NATO should thoughtfully consider how best to help the Baltic States help themselves. Though proud members of the 2-percent club, their small economies prevent them from acquiring the air defense and heavy forces they need to deter future Russian aggression. Estonia and Latvia field only a single light brigade each, while Lithuania fields a mechanized brigade with no tanks and a motorized brigade. Using security-assistance funds (such as the European Deterrence Initiative), the United States and NATO could equip existing Baltic formations with modern tanks, self-propelled artillery, and air defense from reserve stocks, along with the training, spare parts, and ammunition needed to make them viable. The Alliance should also strengthen the enhanced Forward Presence (eFP) formations in the Baltic States, as Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg has suggested. These forces are too small to pose a credible offensive threat, but can defend long enough for other NATO forces, such as the NRF and US armored units in Poland, to move up to assist.

### No Ukraine Escalation

#### Treat Ukraine escalation risk as low – threat fears are self fulfilling

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In this regard, continuous references to the danger of escalation to “World War III” and a steady drumbeat of measures not to be taken can only serve to reassure Putin that he has a free hand in Ukraine. A degree of strategic ambiguity and the possibility of US and NATO intervention should he go too far can be helpful in moderating Russian excesses and controlling escalation. An “all measures on the table” approach will force Russian planners to consider, and prepare for, multiple response scenarios, complicating resource allocation and inducing uncertainty. While deterrence is more art than science, signaling to one’s opponent that one is too frightened to engage is more likely to encourage than to deter.

#### No nuclear escalation from Ukraine – Russia can’t find a use that helps its position – but spurs prolif

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There’s a third question: what does this mean for nuclear proliferation? There’s been an implicit bargain since the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty that a lot of states agree not to acquire nuclear weapons in exchange for nuclear states agreeing not to use them against non-nuclear states. And this was a very specific part of the Budapest Memorandum with Ukraine. Russia has breached that agreement by repeatedly threatening to use nuclear weapons, which could be an argument for other states to want to acquire nuclear weapons. On the other hand, Russia has not used these nuclear weapons likely because it can’t figure out an advantageous way to do so. So I can see the war either incentivizing proliferation because states look at this and say, “The only way not to be threatened by nuclear weapons is to have them ourselves,” or I could see states saying, “Here we have a country that has repeatedly made nuclear weapons central to its National Security Strategy, has the world’s largest nuclear arsenal, and what do they get from for it? Almost nothing.”

### Hardline Good Turn

#### Concessions to Putin fail

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In short, while these more extreme escalatory options deserve consideration, most would leave Russia in even worse shape and at greater risk. Russian elites almost certainly see this. The more moderate and sensible approach—to withdraw to pre-war boundaries, offer concessions to Ukraine and the West, and open Russia to economic integration and improved relations with the international community—is highly improbable as long as Putin remains in power. The most probable outcome is that Putin will continue to escalate until he is defeated outright, removed from power, or offered concessions he can accept as victory.

### Baltics Turn

#### Russia consolidation leads to Baltic escalation

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The fourth rung

Consolidating gains. Six months into the campaign, Russia will face one of two outcomes. The first is gradual progress through a combination of mounting Ukrainian losses—both military and civilian—that lead to the loss of major urban centers and major groupings of regular forces. Shortages of food, fuel, spare parts, and precision-guided munitions—as well as attrition of major combat systems, such as combat aircraft, main battle tanks, high-altitude air-defense weapons, and self-propelled artillery—could, in time, wear down Ukraine’s defense if not quickly replaced by friendly states. Grinding attrition and catastrophic destruction of industry, agricultural areas, and infrastructure may then force the Ukrainian government to accept a diplomatic settlement that will allow Putin to claim victory. Such a settlement could include Ukrainian acceptance of Russian sovereignty over Crimea, Luhansk, Donetsk, and perhaps Kharkiv and Mariupol, as well as a pledge of permanent neutrality. Putin would also insist on easing of international sanctions as a precondition for a ceasefire. Despite serious losses and tactical defeats, it is too early to count Russia out.

In this case, Putin is likely to consolidate his gains, rebuild and improve his forces, stabilize his internal domestic politics and economy, and attempt to reestablish working relationships with Europe—above all, with Germany. Even costly success in Ukraine will not, however, satisfy Putin. The invasion of Ukraine should be seen as another step in an historic process that includes military aggression in Chechnya, Georgia, Crimea, and the Donbas, as well as the deployment of Russian troops in frozen conflicts in Armenia and Moldova. Further aggression in areas formerly belonging to the Russian empire—above all, the Baltic States—is highly likely following a period of reorganization and recovery.

Avoiding a stalemate or defeat through extreme escalation. The second outcome is a prolonged stalemate or outright defeat. In this scenario, after staggering losses and a scorched-earth campaign throughout Ukraine, Russian forces remain stalled. Ukrainian regular forces have suffered high losses but remain largely intact with high morale, while territorial defense forces continue to fight effectively. Ukrainian performance is actually improving with combat experience, as well as growing confidence and elan. Western material and financial support remains strong.

Internally, domestic unrest in Russia will become a serious threat to Putin’s regime, as crushing economic hardships mount and Russian losses and lack of military success become more widely known. Russian oligarchs facing financial ruin—as well as government, intelligence, and military elites who fear Putin’s wrath and state collapse—may act to remove Putin from power. Pressure to resolve the conflict and reassert control may become overwhelming.

### Prolif Turn

#### Aff Dual use cooperation turn – checks proliferation and misuse of dangerous technology

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ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE/MACHINE LEARNING QUANTUM TECHNOLOGIES NUCLEAR BIOLOGICAL CHEMICAL SPACE

The opportunities and challenges of dual-use technologies

Dual-use technologies, capabilities, concepts, and products are ubiquitous, as just about any civilian technology can have a military application. Examples include GPS, vehicle and aircraft sensors, safety equipment, weapons components, and weapons themselves.

As technology has advanced, the possibility for additional dual-use capabilities or new applications of existing capabilities has increased, which creates both opportunities and risks. The proliferation risk of dual-use technology depends on the strength of export control and treaty regimes, which requires cooperation between allies and adversaries alike.

Looking ahead, the rapid pace of technological advancement means organizations such as NATO must demonstrate flexibility and agility in monitoring and understanding technological advancements to determine when or whether innovation can further Alliance aims or contribute to security concerns, and how allies can promote peaceful and responsible uses of emerging technologies.

The Alliance has already demonstrated its commitment to cooperation over emerging technologies by introducing the Defence Innovation Accelerator for the North Atlantic (DIANA) and establishing a NATO Innovation Fund in 2021.

By addressing dual-use, emerging technologies in the Strategic Concept, NATO can demonstrate that it recognizes—and prioritizes—the significant opportunities and challenges posed by these technologies. Inclusion in the Strategic Concept will also promote enduring support for ongoing efforts and could spur new initiatives to consider the implications of emerging and possibly disruptive technologies in the future security environment. All of these efforts contribute to NATO’s role in deterring illegitimate pursuits of emerging technologies, while ensuring allies remain at the cutting edge of technological capabilities for their collective defense.

### Climate Turn

#### Aff NATO cooperation is critical to climate mitigation

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As NATO reconceptualizes its role to focus on defense and deterrence while also addressing non-traditional challenges such as emerging technologies and climate change, the Alliance should look for opportunities to strengthen climate and technology cooperation with partners, especially with its closest partner states and like-minded international organizations.

NATO’s network of partners extends to forty states around the world, and it includes some of the most innovative economies and global leaders in addressing climate change. According to the United Nations World Intellectual Property Organization Global Innovation Index, eight of the top twenty most innovative global economies are NATO partners. And according to the MIT Green Future Index, which evaluates countries’ ability to transition to a low-carbon future, six of the top twenty states are also NATO partners.

### Science Turn

#### Aff Science focus amplifies NATO strength

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New Partnership Priorities

NATO should identify a set of priorities for cooperation that leverages not only its allies but the strengths of its partners. As evidenced in the data, partner states are international leaders on climate policy, sustainability, and clean technology. They also manage sophisticated markets and innovation ecosystems. They invest heavily in research and development. And they possess world-class human capital. They have as much to offer the Alliance as NATO can offer them in conversations about emerging and disruptive technologies, building climate resilience, science and technology standards, and responding to natural disasters and crises, among others.

The Madrid Strategic Concept will redefine the Alliance’s core tasks. The focus will be on defense and deterrence in the Euro-Atlantic, but cooperative security and relations with partners are still relevant given the myriad non-traditional challenges posed by climate, technology, and authoritarianism. Cooperative security is a means of strengthening the Alliance’s relationships with these global innovation and climate leaders, and leveraging their strengths and experiences to help shape and sustain the rules-based international order.

### Russia Won’t Retaliate

#### If Russia escalates, it will be CYBER not kinetic

Richard D. Hooker, Jr. 4-21-2022, Fellow Nonresident Senior Fellow Scowcroft Center for Strategy and Security Transatlantic Security Initiative https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/, "Climbing the ladder: How the West can manage escalation in Ukraine and beyond," Atlantic Council (ermo/sms, Acc:6-29-2022)

Prepare for the most likely area of escalation: cyberspace. As events progressively turn against Putin, the prospect of cyber war will loom ever larger, as it represents one of Russia’s most powerful remaining weapons. Few Western nations possess true offensive cyber capabilities, and the United States alone possesses the ability to deter major cyberattacks by delivering effective and large-scale reprisals. President Joe Biden has issued clear warnings to the private sector to harden its cyber defenses, which remain patchy and incomplete, and put Putin on notice that cyber assaults on critical infrastructure, the financial sector, and other key targets will be met with severe retaliation. A complicating factor is that cyber warfare on a strategic scale has never occurred, and much remains unknown about it. For example, attacks on critical Russian infrastructure, such as power grids and transportation networks, could unintentionally cause civilian deaths, while intrusion into military command-and-control nodes could alarm the commanders of Russia’s nuclear forces. In many respects, the cyber domain remains the realm of the unknown. Like aerial warfare in the early twentieth century, both sides must grope forward and learn as they go. A strong and clearly articulated cyber-deterrence regime, punctuated by sharp demonstrations if necessary, is the best defense here.

#### Russia badly weakened by Ukraine war

ISA, 6-24-2022, Institute for Strategic Analysis (in Azeri: Strateji Təhlil İnstitutu) http://strati.az/news/3727.html, "Russia’s Perceptional Loss Of Global Stature Post-Ukraine Invasion," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:7-1-2022)

Summing-up Russia’s military losses in its Ukraine Invasion it is starkly evident that Russian overwhelming conventional military power has been militarily ineffective, Russian Army’s military prowess resting on massed use of firepower is questionable and so also is questionable the ‘fighting will’ of Russian Army.

Economically, Russia’s economic strength and resilience stands emasculated by US & Western sanctions applied post-Ukraine Invasion. Russian economy will be more strangled by Western sanctions if Russian President Putin persists in ‘Turning Defeat into Victory’.

Russia’s vast energy resources on whose high global prices Russian economic stability rested and which provided a $ 400 billion military build-up now is threatened by stringent Western economic sanctions.

Economic deprivations are likely to fuel domestic political discontent with serious implications for stability of the Russian State. Initial indicators are already are emerging to the fore.

In conclusion, what can be summed up is that Russian President Putin’s ‘War of Choice’ in Ukraine Invasion has badly misfired and not only endangers President Putin’s longevity in power at Russia’s helm but more seriously sets-back Russia by decades in its quest for regaining its global stature as an alternative centre of power.

### No Middle East War

**No Mid East escalation**

Imran 19 – Myra, writer for The News International. Citing the international seminar on “Strategic Dimensions of Peace and Conflict in South Asia and the Middle East”. “Seminar on ‘Strategic dimensions of peace and conflict in South Asia, Middle East’”, The News, <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/428298-seminar-on-strategic-dimensions-of-peace-and-conflict-in-south-asia-middle-east>, 02-06-2019

Islamabad : **There is a need to study the causes of proxy wars, and what are the potential impacts of such wars on the overall conflict. These thoughts in a daylong international seminar on ‘Strategic Dimensions of Peace and Conflict in** South Asia and **the Middle East,’ organised by Pak Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS**), an Islamabad-based think tank, **participated by prominent national and international scholars.**

**Prof**. Shahram **Akbarzadeh**, Deakin University, Australia, **argued there is significant gap in the literature on non-state actors**. He called for empirical research, along with concrete policy suggestions, on the topic, so as to mitigate the conflicts in the region, in particular South Asia and Middle East.

Speakers grappled at the notion of non-state actors and proxy wars: PIPS director Muhammad Amir Rana said **non-state actors often evoke memories of violent elements**. This despite that as per definition, non-state actors include organizations working for human rights.

Prof. Syed Rifaat Hussain, Department of Government and Public Policy, NUST, said the term “proxy wars” is a contested notion. There is no universal agreement on its definition, nor on the set of circumstances behind such wars. Interestingly, he said, proxy wars are as old as the phenomena of conventional war itself.

Speakers noted **proxy wars are instruments of state power**. As to why states go for it, it was argued, **it is because they are often cheap undertaking to change the status quo**.

Participants noted over the decades, **much of the conflict involves non-state actors**. **Interstate conflict**, on the other hand, **has declined**. In recent times, he said **tit-for-tat tactics on behalf of such actors have reduced their appeal.**

Dr. Ibrahim **Fraihat**, Doha Institute of Graduate Studies, Doha, **termed proxy war as an arms conflict between two parties, though one of them is not directly involved**. This way, **domestic conflicts are escalated by external power intervention**. At the same time, proxy war, if unresolved, can take the shape of conventional war, the most significant example was of Vietnam War. **In contemporary times**, he lamented, **the Middle East has been rendered a stock market of proxy organizations.**

William Gueriache, Associate Professor American University in the Emirates Dubai, said on surface, all states support open diplomacy and multilateralism. Yet the survival of patronage has paved the way for foreign intervention during conflicts in the whole Middle East.

Dr. Marwan Kablan, Director Policy Analysis at the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies Doha, also hinted multiplicity of actors involved in Syrian conflict, calling it as mother of conflicts in the region. It was said that wars cannot be ended unless patron states achieve their interests.

Dr. Shaheen Akhtar, Professor National Defence University Islamabad focused on the apprehension of Pakistan about India’s involvement in Afghanistan. She said Pakistan’s uneasy relationship with Kabul reinforces a perception of encirclement while growing US-India strategic cooperation further aggravates these apprehensions.

**Dr**. Muhammad Riaz **Shad**, National University of Modern Languages (NUML) Islamabad, said **fighting through proxies gives states an opportunity of deniability**.

### Ptx

#### Domestic pushback to plan guts US leadership – turns case

T.J. Pempel 6-15-2022, Professor of Political Science in the Department of Political Science at UC Berkeley https://ucigcc.org/news/what-ukraine-is-teaching-us-about-geoeconomics/, "What Ukraine Is Teaching Us About Geoeconomics," No Publication (ermo/sms, Acc:7-1-2022)

I want to turn back to the question of how this Ukraine-Russia interaction plays out in terms of state strategies vis-a-vis economics. We’ve seen a lot of economic cooperation, but at the heart of some of the questions you’ve been asking is this notion that nation-states are going to be predisposed to look for national economic security, which will mean developing a capacity for relative strength—independent strength—vis a vis global changes. The difficulty is that most states can’t do this, and there’s a strong impulse toward economic cooperation along the technological gradient that will allow states to make up for their potential deficiencies. We’ve talked at this conference about semiconductors and it seems pretty clear that no state, even if it does make major moves in that direction, is going to be capable of complete autarky in a whole host of these high-tech areas.

The second piece of this relates to domestic politics in the U.S. What we’re seeing in the United States is a growing resistance on the part of segments of the Republican Party to the development of international support for Ukraine. We’re seeing resistance to U.S. aid for the military, and we’re seeing much broader isolationism that goes back to the MAGA mentality. This has a ripple effect in terms of how other states will perceive their capacity to rely on the United States economically. The idea of the U.S. as a reliable economic and security partner is very much at risk.