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## "Imitating the Action Of a Tiger: How To Support Ukraine"

Great wars often summon great creativity and imagination from political leaders. Russia's war against Ukraine is no exception. Indeed, Russia's criminal aggression against Ukraine and military failures offers the West a once-in-a-generation opportunity to reshape European and international security. Moreover, it is increasingly urgent to take advantage of the challenge posed by Russia's aggression sooner rather than later. Vladimir Putin evidently still believes he is winning, and both he and the Russian military also evidently believe their own propaganda and are determined to fight to the end to obtain victory.<sup>1</sup> Thus, Putin is now escalating this war by making renewed nuclear threats, threatening Moldova, which has already been targeted, and reconnoitred for such purposes, preparing for a more general mobilisation, and exploiting energy blackmail to attain his objectives.<sup>2</sup> Putin may also be planning a long war of attrition to bleed Ukraine in the belief that he can fracture the NATO alliance and break Ukraine.<sup>3</sup> Third, the scope of Ukraine's needs plus the demands of global reconstruction due to this war already confront the EU, UN, and the West with enormous economic-political challenges that must be met and planned for now.<sup>4</sup> Last, many have argued that prolonging this war increases Putin's temptation to use nuclear weapons.<sup>5</sup> Evidently, Russian insiders are increasingly concerned about precisely this contingency.<sup>6</sup>

Failure to seize this opportunity, conversely, will set back the cause of peace, security, and democracy for years and offer Moscow more opportunities for deranging Europe's equilibrium.<sup>7</sup> This opportunity is global in scope due to the war's global repercussions.

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<sup>1</sup> M. Seddon, "Vladimir Putin Abandons Hopes Of Ukraine Deal And Shifts To Land-Grab Strategy," *Financial Times*, 24 April 2022, <https://www.ft.com/content/a16c4ecd-e835-4e71-a12d-c7bec9f34d7c>.

<sup>2</sup> R.D. Hooker Jr, "Climbing the Ladder: How the West Can Manage Escalation in Ukraine and Beyond," The Atlantic Council, 21 April 2022, <https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/in-depth-research-reports/report/managing-escalation-in-ukraine/>; J. Watling, N. Reynolds, "Operation Z: The Death Throes Of An Imperial Delusion," RUSI, April 2022, <https://static.rusi.org/special-report-202204-operation-z-web.pdf>; A. Coakley, A. Mckinnon, "Moldova Feels the Shock Waves of Putin's War," *Foreign Policy*, 26 April 2022, [https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/26/moldova-ukraine-war-putin-russia/?utm\\_source=PostUp&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=Editors%20Picks%20OC&utm\\_term=41824&tpcc=Editors%20Picks%20OC](https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/26/moldova-ukraine-war-putin-russia/?utm_source=PostUp&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=Editors%20Picks%20OC&utm_term=41824&tpcc=Editors%20Picks%20OC); S. Pokharel, J. Pennington, "Russia Will Shut Off Gas Deliveries To Bulgaria Starting Wednesday, Bulgarian Energy Ministry Says," CNN, 26 April 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/russia-ukraine-war-news-04-26-22/index.html>; A. Soldatov, I. Bogoran, "Vicious Blame Game Erupts Among Putin's Security Forces," CEPA, 25 April, 2022, <https://cepa.org/vicious-blame-game-erupts-among-putins-security-forces/>.

<sup>3</sup> M. Seddon, "At War With the Whole World: Why Putin Might Be Planning a Long Conflict In Ukraine," *Financial Times*, 25 April 2022, <https://www.ft.com/content/63411b89-bf29-4865-b128-89c11870aeca>.

<sup>4</sup> G. Merritt, "The War In Ukraine Will Reshape the European Union," *Friends of Europe*, 26 April 2022, <https://www.friendsofeurope.org/insights/the-war-in-ukraine-will-reshape-the-european-union/>.

<sup>5</sup> "Kremlin Insiders Alarmed Over Growing Toll of Putin's War in Ukraine," *Bloomberg*, 20 April 2022, <https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2022-04-20/putin-s-war-in-ukraine-has-russian-elites-fearing-global-isolation>.

<sup>6</sup> "Kremlin Insiders Alarmed ...," *op. cit.*

<sup>7</sup> E.A. Cohen, "This is the War's Decisive Moment," *The Atlantic*, 12 April 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/04/ukraine-russia-war->

Therefore, only a concerted international effort can alleviate and/or overcome the worldwide economic consequences of Russia's aggression. Thus, Western governments, led by Washington, should adopt Shakespeare's admonition that when the blast of war is in the air, they should imitate the action of a tiger. In other words, they must act imaginatively, boldly, and decisively to ensure that Ukraine wins and Russia loses. Only on that basis can we make real progress on European and international security.

Russia's war crimes in Ukraine began in 2014 with the seizure and incorporation of Crimea into Russia and sparking war in the Donbas but are most visible in the current fighting. These war crimes highlight the entwined moral-political-strategic stakes of this war for European and international security. They also illuminate the linkages between Russian domestic and defence policy, as well as the Russian state's moral degradation under Putin. Indeed, the deliberate use of atrocities, war crimes—indiscriminate bombing of civilian targets, mass murder, deportations, rape, and outright terrorism—are evidently integral parts of Russian military planning from the outset.<sup>8</sup> Russian military conduct, added to state policy, also strongly suggests that Moscow's overall objective is to liquidate any idea of Ukraine as an independent, sovereign state, in a word, genocide.<sup>9</sup> RIA Novosti, the state media outlet, even published a detailed blueprint for forcibly denationalising Ukraine through mass terror and ideological coercion, blending Stalinist precedents with Chinese "re-education camps", indicating that this is a serious state policy.<sup>10</sup> Thus, Russia's war planning and military policy have deliberately embraced state terrorism, making Russia a state terrorist. Russian official media, thwarted by the army's initial defeat, have also adopted what can only be called state-sponsored genocidal speech laced with Soviet and Nazi tropes.<sup>11</sup> So, we should not be surprised that, besides presidents Volodymyr Zelensky and Joe Biden, experts call this campaign genocide.<sup>12</sup>

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[consequences/629541/](https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/04/ukraine-russia-war-consequences/629541/), <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/04/ukraine-russia-war-consequences/629541/>.

<sup>8</sup> M. Amann, M. Gebauer, F. Schmid, "Possible Evidence of Russian Atrocities: German Intelligence Intercepts Radio Traffic Discussing the Murder of Civilians," *Spiegel*, 07 April 2022, <https://www.spiegel.de/international/germany/possible-evidence-of-russian-atrocities-german-intelligence-intercepts-radio-traffic-discussing-the-murder-of-civilians-in-bucha-a-0a191c96-634f-4d07-8c5c-c4a772315b0d>; "Director GCHQ's Speech On Global Security Amid War In Ukraine," GCHQ (UK), 31 March 2022, <https://www.gchq.gov.uk/speech/director-gchq-global-security-amid-russia-invasion-of-ukraine>; C. Cawthorne, "Jake Sullivan Says Russia's Alleged War Crimes In Ukraine Were 'Planned' At 'The Highest Levels'," Fox News, 10 April 2022, <https://www.foxnews.com/politics/jake-sullivan-says-russias-war-crimes-in-ukraine-were-planned-by-highest-levels-of-russian-government>.

<sup>9</sup> F. Thom, "Les Idéologues Russes Visent à Liquider la Nation Ukrainienne," *Desk Russie*, 6 April 2022, <https://desk-russie.eu/2022/04/06/les-ideologues-russes.html>.

<sup>10</sup> "What Russia Should Do With Ukraine—Translation Of An Article By the Russian State News Agency RIA Novosti," 4 April 2022, available via <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/what-russia-should-do-ukraine-translation-article-russian-/>.

<sup>11</sup> R. Dixon, "As Russia's War In Ukraine Founders, Ominous Rhetoric Gains Ground," *The Washington Post*, 13 April, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/world/2022/04/13/russias-war-ukraine-founders-ominous-rhetoric-gains-ground/>.

<sup>12</sup> E. Finkel, "Russia Is Committing Genocide," *The Washington Post*, 6 April 2022, [www.washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com), p. A22; "Biden Says Russia Is Committing 'Genocide' 'in Ukraine,'" NBC News, 12 April 2022, <https://www.nbcnews.com/politics/white-house/biden-calls-putin-actions-ukraine-genocide-rcna24131>.

Therefore, Western leaders must act now to forestall any hope of a Russian victory. This war not only challenges the West because Ukraine is fighting for both its own and European security but also because it threatens the very concept of an international order. As former SACEUR, Gen. Phillip Breedlove (USAF-Ret), has emphasised, “I think we are in a proxy war with Russia. We are using the Ukrainians as our proxy forces.”<sup>13</sup> Russia evidently agrees, as Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has stated that this war is against American power and the alleged threat of a U.S. quest for global hegemony.<sup>14</sup>

Putin spokesmen like Sergei Karaganov, honorary chair of the Moscow think tank the Council for Foreign and Defense Policy, and close to Putin and Lavrov, say that, “We are at war with the West. The European security order is illegitimate”.<sup>15</sup> Consequently, the invasions of Ukraine also confirm that Putin’s Russia cannot survive except as an empire, entailing the diminished sovereignty of all its post-Soviet neighbours and the former members of the Warsaw Pact.<sup>16</sup> This quest for empire means war. It inevitably entails curtailing Russia’s neighbours’ sovereignty and placing their territorial integrity at constant risk as Russia demands imperial restoration and a totally free hand to do so, i.e., war.

Since Russia’s actions confirm its disregard for the sovereignty and integrity of its neighbours, despite solemn agreements that it signed, all agreements with Russia, including arms control accords, are now utterly devalued.<sup>17</sup> Last, it is equally clear that unless the West—acting under U.S. leadership and through institutions like the EU and NATO—resists Russia forcefully, the gains of the last 30 years regarding European security will have been lost, returning us to the bipolar confrontation of the Cold War. Since Putin allegedly thinks he is winning in Ukraine, the necessity of decisively defeating him becomes all the more urgent.<sup>18</sup> This does not necessarily mean using force pre-emptively but it does mean displaying credible deterrence used in tandem with all the instruments of power—for the task is also nonmilitary.

To realise the opportunity presented to us by this war and regain the initiative in fighting for peace and democracy under a rules-based order in Europe if not elsewhere, we must take bolder, more imaginative, and more resolute actions than we have so far. Namely, we must give Ukraine the means to inflict a decisive, incontestable defeat upon Russia. That means a settlement entailing the withdrawal of Russian forces, restoring Ukraine’s territorial integrity at

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<sup>13</sup> “Why Russian Sanctions Won’t Stop Putin,” *The New York Times*, 6 April 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/06/opinion/why-russian-sanctions-wont-stop-putin.html>.

<sup>14</sup> “Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s Interview With Rossiya Television Network, Moscow, April 11, 2022,” MFA Russia, [https://mid.ru/en/foreign\\_policy/news/1808917/](https://mid.ru/en/foreign_policy/news/1808917/)

<sup>15</sup> F. Fubini, “Sergey Karaganov: We Are At War With the West. The European Security Order Is Illegitimate,” *L’Economie*, 22 April 2008, [https://www.corriere.it/economia/aziende/22\\_aprile\\_08/we-are-at-war-with-the-west-the-european-security-order-is-illegitimate-c6b9fa5a-b6b7-11ec-b39d-8a197cc9b19a.shtml](https://www.corriere.it/economia/aziende/22_aprile_08/we-are-at-war-with-the-west-the-european-security-order-is-illegitimate-c6b9fa5a-b6b7-11ec-b39d-8a197cc9b19a.shtml).

<sup>16</sup> S. Blank, “The Values Gap Between Moscow and the West: The Sovereignty Issue,” *Acque et Terre*, no. 6 (2007) pp. 9-14 (Italian), pp. 90-95 (English); S. Blank, “Russia and the Black Sea’s Frozen Conflicts in Strategic Perspective,” *Mediterranean Quarterly* 19, no. 3 (Summer 2008), pp. 23-54.

<sup>17</sup> “Russia Mulls Banning US Nuclear Arms Inspections—Source,” *RIA Novosti*, 9 March 2014, <http://www.en.ria.ru/military>; M.B. Schneider, “Confirmation of Russian Violation and Circumvention of the INF Treaty,” National Institute for Public Policy (Fairfax, VA), National Institute Information Series, no. 360, February 2014.

<sup>18</sup> J. Deaton, “Putin Believes He’s Winning the War, Austrian Chancellor Says,” CNN, 17 April 2022, [https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-putin-news-04-17-22/h\\_c2789afaa290f5311aee5f14371ab176](https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-putin-news-04-17-22/h_c2789afaa290f5311aee5f14371ab176).

least as of 2022, and giving it freedom of choice regarding European security institutions, namely membership tracks for the EU and NATO.

This danger can only be averted by orchestrating a grand strategic design to effectuate Russia's rapid defeat using all the instruments of power—diplomatic, informational, military, and economic—at NATO members' disposal. Only that outcome will give Ukraine and Europe more security. It will also enhance international security beyond Europe and reverberate particularly strongly in Asia, particularly in China. Last, even if paradoxically, this outcome also represents the only visible path to enhancing the Russian people's opportunities for more secure, dignified, prosperous, peaceful, and democratic lives. Throughout Russian history, authentic reform has only come about through defeat in war, because defeat invariably shakes the foundations of the state and forces Russia's rulers to undertake reforms. Here too, defeat in war will undermine the foundations of Putin's system, forcing Russia's ruler to launch reforms.

### **Outcomes to Date**

This war's already discernible results confirm several arguments with special relevance to European and Russian security. First, the biggest threat to Ukraine, its other former Soviet neighbours, European security, and the Russian people themselves, is the continuation of the Putin system of power. The strategic and moral results of this war make this an inescapable conclusion. While the regime's strategic objective is empire and the destruction of the achievements of the 1990s, the means are brutality, direct force, information warfare, and systematic criminality. The criminal acts revealed by this war, whose very inception conforms to the definition of an aggressive war in international law, are no coincidence. They represent a Russian way of war that long predates Putin's extension of that tradition in Grozny, Aleppo, and now throughout Ukraine. Russia's way of war since the sacking of Novgorod, Muscovy's republican rival, in 1478 represents an ongoing tradition of depopulation and destruction of "insubordinate" enemy settlements followed by deportation and colonisation of the area by loyal Russians. Every aspect of this tradition is now occurring in Ukraine and could be expected in other, future campaigns. Indeed, German Defence Minister Lanbrecht warns that if Russia is not defeated here, other wars will follow.<sup>19</sup> The recent hints from Russia that its objective now encompass Moldova support that conclusion.<sup>20</sup>

Meanwhile, the authorisation of this war and of the Russian military's systematic brutality also reflect the moral degeneration of Putin's state and society. Putin's state, from its inception, has been a criminalised operation. The current turn towards totalitarian and ideological coercion highlight its roots in a reactionary turn towards combining Tsarist ideological mantras and corruption in service of a deep-rooted police state. Thus, Russia's launching and conduct of the war, as well as Putin's objectives, link together Putin's domestic and strategic goals. Putin has used this war to restore totalitarianism with all its repressive power melded with an equal regression to a chauvinist, archaising version of neo-Tsarist ideological nostrums that justify

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<sup>19</sup> J. Dahm, "German Defence Minister Says Putin May Go Further Than Ukraine," *Euractiv*, 7 April 2022, [https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short\\_news/german-defence-minister-says-putin-may-go-further-than-ukraine/](https://www.euractiv.com/section/politics/short_news/german-defence-minister-says-putin-may-go-further-than-ukraine/).

<sup>20</sup> M. Necsutu, "Russia Threatens Moldova Over Ban on Ukraine Invasion Symbols," *Balkan Insight*, 21 April 2022, <https://balkaninsight.com/2022/04/21/russia-threatens-moldova-over-ban-on-ukraine-invasion-symbols/>; "Russian General Threatens Moldova," *EU Observer*, 22 April 2022, <https://euobserver.com/tickers/154778>.

imperial conquest. Simultaneously, the government's militaristic policies are impoverishing the population. This impoverishment is not only attributable to sanctions, crushing as they are. Rather it is also the deliberate result of a refusal to reform the economy and overcome the Russian elite's kleptocracy. The results of unleashing pervasive criminality at the top and throughout society are tragically visible not only in the corruption that has been a major cause of the military failures in this war and in the economy's vulnerability to external sanctions but also in the rampant criminality and cruelty on display in this war.

This will only get worse due to the combined impact of sanctions and ever-further repression that will only be broken if Russia suffers a decisive defeat in Ukraine. Consequently, to the extent that Putin can claim success, that is, the retention and even acquisition of Ukrainian territory, that outcome will reinforce and extend Putinism abroad and at home. This "victory" also will then furnish a basis for a subsequent campaign to further redraw Russia's boundaries using whatever pretexts Moscow can fabricate. After all, Catherine the Great tellingly stated that the only way she could defend her frontiers was to extend them. Indeed, Moscow is already installing new governments in the territory it has conquered, as is its habitual practice.<sup>21</sup> Furthermore, a cease-fire along new "lines of contact" will simply grant Russia the privilege of new "frozen conflicts" and put the resolution of old ones even more out of reach than at present. In reality, such conflicts have never been frozen. They have enabled Russian forces in South Ossetia to gnaw away at Georgia's borders. In Donbas, more Ukrainian servicemen died after the Minsk "Accords" than during the months before them. Russia's annexation of Crimea has not only enabled Russia to militarise that peninsula and sustain its forces in Syria, but it has also substantially advanced its historic aim of transforming the Black Sea into its own maritime territory. The only thing frozen about these conflicts has been the process of conflict resolution. In practice, a premature ceasefire would bring Russia one step closer to achieving yet another strategic objective—the partitioning of Ukraine.<sup>22</sup>

An ostensible victory will also embolden the "little Putins", like Viktor Orbán, demoralise and divide NATO and the EU, and allow Putin to mitigate if not escape the consequences of his crimes. On a global scale, "victory" will shatter aspirations to restrain aggression from any source. These are all weighty reasons for ensuring a decisive Ukrainian victory as quickly as possible. But the strategic imperatives for imposing an unmistakably decisive defeat upon Russia's practices are equally urgent. Russia's moral and legal nihilism entails serious strategic considerations and shows the inextricability of moral and strategic values in this war. Lawrence Freedman emphasises this profound nexus by writing that:

*The effect has also been to bring a moral clarity to all strategic calculations. Having now seen what happens when Russia occupies Ukrainian territory, Western governments know that they cannot push President Zelensky to make any territorial concessions simply to bring the war to an end. Of course, the West is in no position to bring regime change to Moscow. Nor can Ukraine. Only the Russians can do that. So, all that can be done is to*

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<sup>21</sup> J. Sherr, "The Fear of Victory," ICDS, 212 April 2022, <https://icds.ee/en/the-fear-of-victory/>.

<sup>22</sup> *Ibidem*.

*support Ukraine until Russian troops have left, leaving Putin to face the consequences of his catastrophic folly.*<sup>23</sup>

Elsewhere, Freedman observes that now, Western governments dare not let Ukraine fail.<sup>24</sup> Similarly, Nigel Gould-Davies writes that:

*The war crimes show that, as long as Russia occupies Ukrainian territory, an end to fighting does not mean an end to violence. On the contrary: a ceasefire would allow Russian forces not only to regroup and rearm, but [also] to brutalize and murder civilians unhindered. As the “Realist School” of international relations does not appear to recognize, not just geopolitical space but human lives are at stake. All Ukrainians now know for certain what awaits them if Russian forces enter their town or village, and will resist accordingly. It follows that partition or negotiated compromise will bring neither peace nor stability.*<sup>25</sup>

Consequently, Putin can no longer function credibly as a reliable interlocutor vis-à-vis European governments, Canada, the United States, or his neighbours. Putin has revived a situation of what would be at best a permanent Cold War or an analogy thereof. Hence, Russian power must be contained for the benefit of both European and international security. This is both a moral and strategic imperative. Therefore, the urgent necessity is to provide full and long-term military and other support to Ukraine so it can negate Russian offensives and then counter-attack to expel the invaders from its territory, hopefully including Donbas and Crimea. As Gould-Davies also wrote: “These crimes have strategic consequences that will shape the course of the war. Above all, they make it more likely that any outcome will be defined not by compromise and settlement, but by victory and defeat.”<sup>26</sup>

Since talks have (predictably) gone nowhere, this too means that the war will decide Ukraine’s future.<sup>27</sup> Therefore, any solution leaving Russia with the territory it captured in 2014, not to mention new conquests, remains inherently sub-optimal. While Ukraine might have to accept a return to the status quo ante as of 2022, that can only be an interim solution that ensures an ongoing long period of unresolved tension between Kyiv and Moscow along with the constant potential to escalate into violence. It also takes Putin off the hook at home, allowing him or his successors to claim some sort of victory and renew their imperial claim and aspirations. Successful imposition of that claim will extinguish all possibilities for the domestic reform in

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<sup>23</sup> L. Freedman, “[The Russo-Ukraine War: Phase Two](https://samf.substack.com/p/the-russo-ukraine-war-phase-two?token=eyJ1c2VyX2lkIjozOTY0OTcxLCJwb3N0X2lkIjo1MTY4MDMyMiwiXyI6InFQWVFLIiwiaWF0IjoxNjQ5MjUwOTg3LCJleHAiOjE2NDkyNTQ1ODcsImZcyI6InB1Yi02MzE0MjliLCJzdWUiOiJwb3N0LXJlYWN0aW9uIn0.7MtSwsIN8Du8w7qIuQmzH6-XWDk-zDmiZkM2WY32PpA&s=r),” 6 April 2022, available at <https://samf.substack.com/p/the-russo-ukraine-war-phase-two?token=eyJ1c2VyX2lkIjozOTY0OTcxLCJwb3N0X2lkIjo1MTY4MDMyMiwiXyI6InFQWVFLIiwiaWF0IjoxNjQ5MjUwOTg3LCJleHAiOjE2NDkyNTQ1ODcsImZcyI6InB1Yi02MzE0MjliLCJzdWUiOiJwb3N0LXJlYWN0aW9uIn0.7MtSwsIN8Du8w7qIuQmzH6-XWDk-zDmiZkM2WY32PpA&s=r>.

<sup>24</sup> L. Freedman, “NATO and Ukraine,” 13 April 2022, available at <https://samf.substack.com/p/nato-and-ukraine?s=r>.

<sup>25</sup> N. Gould-Davies, “The Strategic Meaning of Russian War Crimes in Ukraine,” *The Moscow Times*, 13 April 2022, <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2022/04/13/the-strategic-meaning-of-russian-war-crimes-in-ukraine-a77345>.

<sup>26</sup> *Ibidem*.

<sup>27</sup> “Putin Says Talks With Ukraine Are At a ‘Dead End’,” CNN 12 April 2022, [https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-putin-news-04-12-22/h\\_c91c00763f131bbeed411565ee0b6319](https://www.cnn.com/europe/live-news/ukraine-russia-putin-news-04-12-22/h_c91c00763f131bbeed411565ee0b6319).

Russia that alone can fundamentally transform Russia's empire/autocracy nexus and equally far-reaching improvement in European security.

Moreover, an end to hostilities with a Russia controlling Ukrainian territory could make Ukraine into another Korea or Cold-War Germany. The experience of post-Soviet wars, such as Armenia vs. Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh, shows that such conflicts do not end. Thus, any outcome other than the decisive defeat of Putin's army will foster further Russian attacks on progress at home and on the international order abroad. Indeed, those were the motives behind this war—strategic-territorial aggrandisement of Russia abroad and consolidation of Putin's authority and power at home. Apparently, Russian elites have also set their ambitions on aggrandising Russian territory beyond Ukraine, for example in Moldova where extensive preparation of the theatre has already taken place.<sup>28</sup>

This war's core issue and *casus belli* remains Putin and Russia's deep-rooted refusal to accept the idea and fact of independent Ukrainian statehood. That refusal is tied to Putin's quest for both empire and autocracy. Despite Russia's unrelenting campaign to convince foreign and domestic audiences that the post-Cold War settlement humiliated, isolated, and then subsequently threatened it, Russia still cannot offer any European audience a vision, plan, or incentive structure that would justify its leading role there apart from reliance on Russian forces. Therefore, it is no surprise that post-Soviet countries crave the only genuinely credible security guarantees available to them—NATO membership.<sup>29</sup>

The two acts of aggression against Ukraine of 2014 and 2022 thus reveal that the fundamental precondition for deepening European security is foreclosing Russia's imperial option. Empire and autocracy are two sides of the same coin and mutually justifying ideological-institutional formations in Russian history. Whereas other states *have had* empires, Russia and China *are* empires. And it remains crucial to their autocracies' perpetuation that they still view themselves as empires entitled to further land and a global status as great powers.

### **The Necessity for Bolder Responses**

Russia's threat and overall security policy mandate a bolder, more creative, and more fully strategic programme of action against them. But obviously, that programme must start from existing realities. Since the record of the last generation abundantly validates Bismarck's dictum that the concept of Europe remains an exclusively geographical one, the leadership of this innovative programme of action must remain a fundamental U.S. responsibility. Furthermore, it must be conceived as an integrated strategy that embraces all the instruments of power at Washington and Europe's disposal, that is, diplomacy, information, and military and economic power. Therefore, these should be, insofar as possible, NATO and EU programmes or even mutually coordinated actions. Some parts of this agenda already exist or are about to, for example, the expanding allied shipment of large-scale amounts of increasingly heavy and offensive weaponry to Ukraine. But to bring this war to our desired outcome rapidly, we must move faster to implement this programme of action in its totality or as close to it as possible and in service of a comprehensive strategic vision.

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<sup>28</sup> J. Watling, N. Reynolds, "Operation Z ...," *op. cit.*

<sup>29</sup> B. Clinton, "I Tried to Put Russia on Another Path," *The Atlantic*, 7 April 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/04/bill-clinton-nato-expansion-ukraine/629499/>.

Moreover, our strategic actions always have a global audience and strategic resonance, particularly with China, who remains our primary strategic challenger. Actions taken against Russia must therefore not only be effective, they must also make China take notice that similar costs could be imposed upon it for analogous actions, such as invading Taiwan. In addition, China should also draw the appropriate conclusion from Western actions and refrain from undue support for Moscow's reckless and criminal war, as appears to be the case now.

The Western response must therefore be wholly strategic, that is, aiming at Russia's defeat, the restoration of Ukrainian territorial integrity and sovereignty, and the democratic reconstruction of Ukraine, as a prelude to its willing and complete reintegration into European security structures, meaning NATO, the EU, and sub-regional institutions, such as the Three Seas Initiative. Only on this basis can Ukraine and its neighbours, as well as Russia enjoy a true measure of domestic security, prosperity, democracy, and peace, while Russia will thereby enjoy the first real opportunity in years, if not since 1914, to realise its European vocation and integrate into Europe. At the same time, this process must encompass all the elements of power stated above, which, in actuality, are often mutually reinforcing and transcend watertight analytic categories.

## **Information**

Information warfare (IW) and cyberwarfare are two sides of the same coin in Russian military doctrine and strategy. Both are among the most critical and persistent instruments of power in Russia's arsenal. In Ukraine, including Crimea and Donbas, Moscow has waged information warfare, including political subversion, for years to undermine loyalties to Kyiv, compromise political movements and actors, and gain controlling positions of leverage over Ukrainian media and politics.<sup>30</sup> Therefore, it would be a serious mistake to assume that IW and cyberwarfare have been absent or played only a minimal role in this war to date. Russian attempts to strike at Ukrainian infrastructure or to influence Western media and elite opinion may have been largely unsuccessful until now, but they continue uninterrupted.<sup>31</sup> Indeed, Washington and allied intelligence officials expect an impending large-scale attack upon critical

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<sup>30</sup> W. Varretoni, "Sweetness of the Status Quo: Strategic Patience and the Technology of Russia's Capture of Crimea," a paper presented to the annual convention of the Association for the Study of Nationalities, Columbia University, 15 April 2010; L. Roslycky, "The Soft Side of Dark Power: A Study in Soft Power, National Security and the Political-Criminal Nexus with a Special Focus on the Post-Soviet Political-Criminal Nexus, the Russian Black Sea Fleet and Separatism in the Autonomous Republic of Crimea" (PhD dissertation, University of Groningen, 2011).

<sup>31</sup> A. Hurska, "Ukraine's Other Front: The Battle in the Cyber Domain," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, 19 April 2022, <https://mailchi.mp/jamestown.org/eurasia-daily-monitor-volume-19-issue-56?e=045e1b7db0>.



infrastructure in the U.S and abroad.<sup>32</sup> Meanwhile, Putin’s domestic IW campaign has also succeeded in convincing the domestic Russian audience of the justness of Russia’s war.<sup>33</sup>

Western governments, must, therefore, continue making the case for Ukraine. Thus, they must lay out Russian war crimes, beginning with the invasion of 2014, the more recent launch of operations in February 2022, and the strategic importance for the West of defending Ukraine. This information must be disseminated constantly in order to ensure a proper investigation and formation of an appropriate mechanism for trying those responsible for these crimes. The West must also add its efforts to those currently underway that use information technology to undermine Russia’s conduct of the war.<sup>34</sup> At the same time, Western governments and, hopefully, private media must uncover and shut down the flow of Russian money to “influencers”, elites, and political movements in the West and expose Russian influence operations wherever possible. Such operations should also expose and deter Russian attacks on critical infrastructure in the U.S., Europe, and Ukraine. Finally, concurrently, we must bring the war home to Russia by breaking through Putin’s efforts to cut off information flows to his own people, difficult as that may be. This means reporting the costs of the war in men and materiel to Russia, exposing the corruption of defence manufacturers who own a significant part of the failures to date thanks to their sloth and corruption.

But we must also expose and reveal the corruption of Putin and the elite along with the costs to the Russian people in terms of healthcare, poverty, and education. Moreover, the reporting on the war crimes committed by Putin, government officials, and senior officers along with foreign investigations into them must also be widely disseminated. Last, in return for attacks on critical infrastructure, we need not just to reply but to respond disproportionately to deprive Moscow of the strategic initiative here, thwart its overall strategy that aims at achieving escalation dominance throughout all the stages of any crisis, and demonstrate that we will not be deterred by its threats or capabilities.

However, the strategic imperative of a coherent NATO as well as exclusively American information programme must be decisively upgraded in U.S. planning. As Anne Applebaum writes, we need a systematic overhaul of information policy to deliver information in Russian, better understand the Russian audience, and reach around and through Putin’s informational iron curtain.<sup>35</sup> Eliot Cohen, among others, also suggests what a truly strategic information programme might look like:

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<sup>32</sup> J. Gill, “[Allied cyber authorities warn ‘evolving intelligence’ points to incoming Russian cyber attack,](https://breakingdefense.com/2022/04/allied-cyber-authorities-warn-evolving-intelligence-points-to-incoming-russian-cyber-attack/)” *Breaking Defense*, 22 April 2022, [https://breakingdefense.com/2022/04/allied-cyber-authorities-warn-evolving-intelligence-points-to-incoming-russian-cyber-attacks/?utm\\_campaign=Breaking%20News&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmt=210672646&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-1AFoG\\_zrFbbcDTKPHBEesJt6mbTeap9W6-hHV28br02534k5xUodbbS9NyEDhVjX9snAwnSJERWLqiVbIcrSZ5KNByA&utm\\_content=210672646&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://breakingdefense.com/2022/04/allied-cyber-authorities-warn-evolving-intelligence-points-to-incoming-russian-cyber-attacks/?utm_campaign=Breaking%20News&utm_medium=email&_hsmt=210672646&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-1AFoG_zrFbbcDTKPHBEesJt6mbTeap9W6-hHV28br02534k5xUodbbS9NyEDhVjX9snAwnSJERWLqiVbIcrSZ5KNByA&utm_content=210672646&utm_source=hs_email).

<sup>33</sup> I. Hill, “Rallying Around the Flag: Domestic Support For Putin is holding up,” Lowy Institute, 21 April 2022, <https://www.lowyinstitute.org/the-interpreter/rallying-around-flag-domestic-support-putin-holding>.

<sup>34</sup> M. Schnell, “Belarus Hackers Say They’ve Targeted Railway To Impede Russian Troop Movements,” *The Hill*, 25 January 2022, <https://thehill.com/policy/cybersecurity/591175-belarus-hackers-say-theyve-targeted-railway-to-impede-russian-troop/>.

<sup>35</sup> A. Applebaum, “There Is No Liberal Order,” *The Atlantic*, CCCXXIX, No. 4, May 2022, p. 12.

*Since the dominant mode of war today is hybrid conflict, the United States needs to be much better at playing offense. To that end, it might revive the U.S. Information Agency, which spread pro-American propaganda during the Cold War before being dismantled in the late 1990s. Or it might mobilize civilian cyber-militias that could undermine hostile governments by wielding the most powerful weapon of all, the truth. The impromptu mustering of anti-Russian hackers by the Ukrainian government after Russia's invasion is one example. The United States should also make advocacy for civil liberties both a matter of principle and a tool to weaken opponents. Russians, for example, should be bombarded with messages exposing the lies their regime feeds them, the truth regarding the human and economic losses they have experienced in and because of the war in Ukraine, and the calamitous consequences of becoming a Chinese vassal state excluded from the West.<sup>36</sup>*

## **Economics and Energy**

Much of the economic and energy agenda that should be implemented to assure a Russian defeat already exists, such as sanctions and cutbacks on energy purchases. But it remains urgent to strike further at Russian energy sales to Europe and financial operations while simultaneously devising an effective economic mechanism for reconstructing Ukraine and integrating it more durably with European economies. Existing and future economic moves must be correlated with other strategic moves in other domains to bring about a Ukrainian victory and Russian defeat. Sanctions so far have been virtually the only instrument of economic warfare against Russia and not maximally effective at that. Certainly, they have not persuaded Putin to desist. Instead, he still insists that, “and there is no doubt that we will definitely attain the goals set.”<sup>37</sup>

Consequently, sanctions striking the energy trade with Europe must strike harder and further undermine Russia's war-waging capacity.<sup>38</sup> But they must be based on both the overriding strategic imperatives we have listed above and an accurate grasp of reality, namely that despite the costs to Europe being relatively small compared to Ukraine's suffering, Russian energy supplies to Europe cannot be completely eliminated, for the costs of doing so are prohibitive and hence, the need to find alternative sources of energy for now and the longer term. These new sources of supply should be utilised to deprive Russia of opportunities for further energy blackmail of Europe and thus ensure security of supplies to Europe from multiple diverse sources. Those sources could now include the U.S., Africa, Latin America, Central Asia,

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<sup>36</sup> E. Cohen, “The Return Of Statecraft,” *Foreign Affairs*, 19 April 2022, [https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2022-04-19/return-statecraft?utm\\_medium=newsletters&utm\\_source=fatoday&utm\\_campaign=The%20Return%20of%20Statecraft&utm\\_content=20220421&utm\\_term=FA%20Today%20-%20112017](https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/world/2022-04-19/return-statecraft?utm_medium=newsletters&utm_source=fatoday&utm_campaign=The%20Return%20of%20Statecraft&utm_content=20220421&utm_term=FA%20Today%20-%20112017)

<sup>37</sup> “Conversation With Vostochny Cosmodrome Employees,” The Kremlin, 12 April 2022, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/68180>.

<sup>38</sup> “Moody's Predrek Rossii Defolt Pri Nevyplate Dollarov, Investoram k 4 Mai,” RBC, 19 April 2022, [https://www.rbc.ru/economics/15/04/2022/6258acab9a7947ea83ad0990?utm\\_source=Bear+Market+Brief&utm\\_campaign=960e1971be-EMAIL\\_CAMPAIGN\\_2022\\_04\\_19\\_11\\_28&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_term=0\\_928ed11748-960e1971be-201340349](https://www.rbc.ru/economics/15/04/2022/6258acab9a7947ea83ad0990?utm_source=Bear+Market+Brief&utm_campaign=960e1971be-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2022_04_19_11_28&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_928ed11748-960e1971be-201340349).

Azerbaijan, and potentially a new Eastern Mediterranean gas pipeline that is now under renewed consideration.<sup>39</sup>

Although these transitions to a new energy regime will be painful, business as usual is clearly unsupportable and unviable. Moreover, if intelligently led and conducted, this transition to a new energy order will generate strong, and probably offsetting, economic growth, while diminishing Russia's effective capacity to blackmail, subvert, and threaten European governments on the basis of energy supplies. One possible route to this outcome would be by imposing excise taxes on hydrocarbon use to make them too expensive and strike at Russia by reducing its energy revenues. In turn, those revenues, along with the Russian funds confiscated through sanctions could then pay for the restoration and reconstruction of Ukraine.<sup>40</sup> Reconstruction is essential to any future European peace and offers the EU a vast new field of opportunity for strengthening its role across Europe. Moreover, reconstructing Ukraine on the basis of contemporary infrastructure and technology provides a huge opportunity for its integration into regional organisations like the Three Seas Initiative and larger ones like the EU. Simultaneously, ensuring economic growth and integration of all of Eastern Europe on a vastly more modern basis is critical to that region's future, not least regarding energy since Ukraine, if it gets its energy house in order, actually possesses enough energy to meet its own needs and even export energy to its neighbours.<sup>41</sup> Therefore, given the size and scale and of the challenge and opportunity inherent in the process of reconstructing Ukraine, planning for it must begin now and take advantage of the Russian funds under our control to become, if possible, a global process involving countries like Japan and also involve these strategic goals of reaching energy self-sufficiency for Ukraine and its placement on the EU's membership track.

## Diplomatic and Military Moves

Clearly all the aforementioned actions reinforce the pursuit of Western strategic goals, for example, the defeat of Russia and the full integration of Ukraine into Europe. But since foreclosing Russia's atavistic imperial dream is the precondition for European security, Western policy cannot wait upon the war's outcome. Moreover, there appears to be a growing consensus that the longer this war lasts the more dangerous it becomes, while the possibility of escalation due to Russian failures and Putin's inability to retreat correspondingly rises.<sup>42</sup> Therefore, while enhancing readiness for the long haul, we need a bolder, more imaginative, and even proactive

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<sup>39</sup> S. Micholopoulos, "Ukraine War Revives East Med Gas Pipeline Talks But Eu Insists On Feasibility," *Euractiv*, 5 April 2022, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/ukraine-war-revives-eastmed-gas-pipe-talks-but-eu-insists-on-feasibility/>.

<sup>40</sup> D. Frum, "What Ukraine Needs Now," *The Atlantic*, 11 April 2022, <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/04/ukraine-infrastructure-damage-repair-cost/629519/>; T. Van de Graaf, "The EU Has Lots Of Options For Targeting Russian Oil It Should Use Them," *World Politics Review*, 15 April 2022, <https://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/30471/for-eu-russia-sanctions-oil-should-come-next>.

<sup>41</sup> A. Amelin, A. Prokip, A. Umland, "The Forgotten Potential of Ukraine's Energy Reserves," *Harvard International Review*, 10 October 2022, <https://hir.harvard.edu/ukraine-energy-reserves/>.

<sup>42</sup> D. Ignatius, "The Hidden Risks Of Russia's War In Ukraine," *The Washington Post*, 18 March 2022, [www.washingtonpost.com](https://www.washingtonpost.com), p. A21; N. Ferguson, "The Fates of Ukraine and Putin Turn on 7 Forces of History," *Bloomberg*, 9 March 2022, [https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-03-09/niall-ferguson-ukraine-invasion-struggles-could-be-the-end-for-putin?utm\\_campaign=Cultivation&utm\\_medium=email&\\_hsmi=207631980&\\_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9Qd2DI8m9RhCpmb\\_tYfWJgGmjF6USK1w1myBPZuz48RiT8DCCihNxVTX4TgmdNho8m14YmipK5-vYuKid3AiraZljbhw&utm\\_content=207631980&utm\\_source=hs\\_email](https://www.bloomberg.com/opinion/articles/2022-03-09/niall-ferguson-ukraine-invasion-struggles-could-be-the-end-for-putin?utm_campaign=Cultivation&utm_medium=email&_hsmi=207631980&_hsenc=p2ANqtz-9Qd2DI8m9RhCpmb_tYfWJgGmjF6USK1w1myBPZuz48RiT8DCCihNxVTX4TgmdNho8m14YmipK5-vYuKid3AiraZljbhw&utm_content=207631980&utm_source=hs_email).

policy to deprive Putin of the initiative and ability to control escalation, while also laying the groundwork for seizing the opportunities presented by this war regarding European and international security. The actions needed include but go beyond the long-term transfer of the kinds of weapons Ukraine now needs despite the growing consensus of meeting those needs.

Thus, while working to impose a decisive defeat on Russia, the U.S. and its allies must undertake a programme of sustained diplomatic and military activity to forge a stronger unity among themselves and broaden international support for isolating Russia.<sup>43</sup> That global campaign must go hand in hand with an urgent, large-scale, and long-term military programme to ensure victory and change Putin's calculus, for he evidently still believes that he is winning.<sup>44</sup> In the first instance, this military-political or diplomatic programme must establish a long-term sustainable policy that goes beyond meeting Ukraine's needs, not just for defence but also for an offensive corresponding to long-term operations against Russia. This means supporting Ukraine economically over time to ensure the long-term regular provision of heavy and offensive weapons. In the U.S., this means passing the current lend-lease legislation now in Congress, signing it into law, and then implementing it to the fullest degree possible. But in Europe, it also requires a long-term commitment from NATO and all its members to provide the material and military wherewithal to sustain Ukraine and its ultimate victory. The necessity for such action represents one reason among many that Ukraine should enter into NATO membership as soon as possible.

Concurrently, Western objectives must also prominently feature Ukraine's inclusion in the EU as well as regional and sub-regional organisations like the Three Seas Initiative. We have already stated that Ukrainian and East European security and reconstruction are contingent upon a large-scale programme to rebuild Ukraine along contemporary lines and integrate it more fully with its neighbours. EU membership, which is critical to these processes, appears to be gaining traction in Europe. The French ambassador to Washington, Phillipe Etienne, stated that the war had changed the history of our continent, and was absolutely "a game-changer."<sup>45</sup> Even more importantly, EU President Ursula Von der Leyen has already stated that the EU will accelerate the process by which Ukraine becomes a member and has handed Kyiv the questionnaire necessary to start the process.<sup>46</sup> So, it appears that while this membership is a lengthy process, it will go forward.

Finally, NATO should announce Ukraine's full membership as soon as possible, ideally tomorrow. Admittedly this action might initially stiffen Russia's resolve to fight as well as

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<sup>43</sup> J. Sherr, "The Fear of Victory ...," *op. cit.*; J. Dempsey, "Europe's Fading Unity Over Ukraine," Carnegie Europe, 21 April 2022, <https://carnegieeurope.eu/strategieurope/86948>; "White House National Security Adviser: US Seeks To Weaken And Isolate Russia," *Balkan Times*, 19 April 2022, <https://balkantimes.org/en/white-house-national-security-adviser-us-seeks-to-weaken-and-isolate-russia/>.

<sup>44</sup> D.E. Sanger, "Russian Missile Tests Fuels Fears Of An Isolated Putin," *New York Times*, 20 April 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/2022/04/20/us/politics/russia-putin-missile-test.html>.

<sup>45</sup> J. Feldscher, "Russia's Invasion da 'Game Changer' for EU Membership, French Ambassador Says," *Defense One*, 19 April 2022, <https://www.defenseone.com/policy/2022/04/russias-invasion-game-changer-european-union-membership-french-ambassador-says/365855/>.

<sup>46</sup> "EU Chief Promises Speeded Up Process For Ukraine To Seek Membership," *Reuters*, 8 April 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/world/europe/eu-chief-promises-speeded-up-process-ukraine-seek-membership-2022-04-08/>; "Von der Leyen Gives Ukraine Questionnaire For EU Accession Discussions," *Euronews*, 8 April 2022, <https://www.euronews.com/2022/04/08/von-der-leyen-gives-ukraine-questionnaire-for-eu-accession-discussions>.

trigger opposition among those NATO members who oppose this on the grounds of Ukraine's incomplete democratisation and because it will provoke Russia further. Obviously, Ukraine's military commitment or capabilities are undeniable, even though it, like everyone else, could stand improvement. First, even if Ukraine's democratic processes before the war were incomplete, they clearly surpass the standards now in force in members like Hungary and Turkey, about which NATO has been largely silent. Second, as regards Russia, Moscow has long regarded NATO's very existence as a provocation. Failure to admit Kyiv will hardly alter that entrenched paranoid belief of the Russian elite. But there is nothing more Russia can do to Ukraine short of a nuclear strike. Moreover, NATO is eager to admit Finland and Sweden who represent an equal if not greater threat as seen by Moscow.

There are other powerful reasons for admitting Ukraine into NATO as quickly as possible. First, doing so not only would greatly boost Ukrainian morale but it also would demonstrate NATO's resolve to deny Russia anything resembling a victory, while also committing NATO under the provisions of the Washington Treaty to the long-term supply of weapons Ukraine needs to win the war. Second, this action negates the entire purpose of the war from Russia's standpoint, namely prevention of Ukraine's NATO membership. This step will resonate throughout Russia because it drives home to the elite and population the insane futility of this war, making it clear that no victory is possible. Thus, it will intensify the already visible signs of deteriorating morale within the armed forces and the overall Russian population.

Third, although NATO should make clear for now that it will not send its forces into the war, Ukrainian membership takes the card of nuclear and other escalations out of Moscow's hands, and places the control of the escalation ladder in NATO's hands, thereby undermining Russia's overall strategy of controlling escalation through small-scale wars on Russia's periphery to upset the equilibrium of Europe.<sup>47</sup> Russia, and more importantly Putin and those around him, will now realise that any use of chemical or biological weapons, not to mention, nuclear strikes, risks a wider war with a vastly superior NATO for no purpose other than to preserve Putin's kleptocracy at the expense of the rest of Russia. This decision thus represents a position strike, not at Russian forces but at Russia's overall strategy. In tandem with Finnish and Swedish entry into NATO, that decision will highlight to all Russian audiences the reckless folly of Putin's policies and thus the futility of this war.

Fourth, Ukrainian membership in NATO gives the Alliance a legal basis for strengthening its position in the increasingly vital Black Sea.<sup>48</sup> Specifically with Ukraine as a NATO member, and in the U.S. on the basis of the lend-lease legislation, NATO can emplace bases around the Black Sea or, provided Turkey, a NATO member approves it, actually send ships into the Black Sea, not to fight, but to escort Ukrainian vessels in order to break Moscow's illegal blockade of the Ukrainian coastline. Since the aggression as a whole is illegal, so too is the blockade. Therefore, breaking it has many benefits beyond reducing Russian pressure on Ukraine. Breaking the blockade enables Ukraine to make money shipping agricultural and other exports abroad, helps increase its revenues to some degree and also alleviates foreign grain and

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<sup>47</sup> S. Blank, "Reflections On Russian Nuclear Strategy," [in:] A.B. Lowther (ed.), *Guide To Nuclear Deterrence In the Age Of Great Power Competition*, Louisiana Tech Research Institute (publisher), Bossier City, La., 2020, pp. 229-243.

<sup>48</sup> M. Hess, "Welcome to the Black Sea Era of War," *Foreign Policy*, 25 April 2022, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2022/04/25/black-sea-war-russia-ukraine-turkey/>.

food shortages. Equally, if not more importantly, breaking the illegal blockade also upholds the long-standing international principle for which Washington went to war in 1812 and 1917—the freedom of the seas. Finally, it will also establish a lasting basis for a much-needed full-time presence in the critically important Black Sea. Until now, neither Washington nor NATO fully utilised their rights under the Montreux Treaty and international law.<sup>49</sup> Following these actions is fully legal, consistent with our Alliance obligations and interests, and clearly a deterrent to Russian aggression and the threats posed by allowing Moscow to turn the Black Sea into an exclusive Russian lake.

## Conclusions

Admittedly, this is a highly ambitious agenda. But the scale of the crisis and of Russian aggression and war crimes justifies this ambition. Whether or not this is the greatest European crisis since 1945, Russia's actions represent unbridled aggression and threaten the very concept of international order in Europe and globally. As the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, Gen. Mark Milley (USA), told CNN: “If this is left to stand, if there is no answer to this aggression, if Russia gets away with this cost-free, then so goes the so-called international order”,<sup>50</sup> A threat of this magnitude therefore requires a strategy and policies of unusual boldness, resolve, and vision. Clearly, this is not a time for half-measures or an ostrich-like policy of ignoring the war and its consequences. Under the circumstances, a policy of half-steps is visibly insufficient. Finnish and Swedish membership in NATO reflects their understanding of what is at stake and that U.S. power manifested in the Alliance remains indispensable to their, European, and international security.<sup>51</sup> Therefore, Washington must lead the alliance boldly to strengthen both security and deterrence, controlling the “ladder” of escalation without actually resorting to violence to maintain the peace. That restraint may lack a tiger's explosive violence. But if successful, it will constrain Russia's options and forces and bring about Ukraine's victory. Then, Ukraine, with resolute allied support, will have saved itself by its exertions and Europe by its example.

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<sup>49</sup> Gen. F. Ben Hodges, (USA-Ret), “10 Ways to Boost NATO's Black Sea Defenses,” CEPA, 5 April 2022, <https://cepa.org/10-ways-to-boost-natos-black-sea-defenses/>.

<sup>50</sup> Z. Cohen, E. Kaufman, M. Conte, “Exclusive: Top US General Tells CNN 'Global International Security Order' Is At Stake Following Russia's Invasion Of Ukraine,” CNN, 26 April 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/04/26/politics/mark-milley-interview-cnntv/index.html>.

<sup>51</sup> G. Gressel, “Ukraine: Time For the West To Prepare For the Long War,” ECFR, 19 April 2022, <https://ecfr.eu/article/ukraine-time-for-the-west-to-prepare-for-the-long-war/>.