

Russia's Strategic Failure in Ukraine

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ABSTRACT

While the Russian invasion of Ukraine in 2022 certainly had the immediate goal of eliminating pro-Western leadership and replacing it with a puppet, this strategic move was not successful, and the invasion has now escalated into a full-blown war. This article investigates the challenges involved and the variables that have contributed to Russia's strategic decision to have Ukraine on its side becoming one in which it battles to maintain its hold on the tiny portions of Ukraine that it controls. Why has Russia failed to achieve its goal, and what elements will continue to influence the ongoing conflict? This study highlights both internal and external reasons that have influenced the nature of the war, including the Ukrainian political leadership's willingness to take a permanent stand against Moscow's age-old plan to annex Ukraine and deprive it of its freedom. The report concluded that Russia's strategic approach not only failed in Ukraine but also complicated its relations with most of the states on its western borders, making its plan to keep Ukraine or any eastern European nation in its sphere of influence nearly impossible. The document urges a diplomatic settlement to the war while noting that this is problematic in light of Moscow's unwillingness to yield and Kyiv's desire to withdraw Russian forces from all of its areas unconditionally.

INTRODUCTION

The invasion of Ukraine occurred in February 2022, but it is safe to assume that it began in 2014, when Russia took over Crimea, a part of Ukraine. When viewed in retrospect, it is clear that Russia devised a strategy to achieve the 2022 military invasion. This study evaluates Russia's policy in Ukraine thus far. In a situation where the war is becoming prolonged and sometimes characterized as a frozen war, can the Russian approach be regarded as a failure, or is it successful in light of other geopolitical objectives that Russia is accused of harboring? Russia and its policies may be viewed from two perspectives. There is the national one for Russia and another, a subset of the national one, that it wishes to achieve in Ukraine. This work examines the Russian Ukraine policy from the perspective of the Russian national strategy. This paper contends that while the Ukraine component of the strategy has experienced losses, the overarching Russian national strategy has not, and Moscow may continue to explore ways to fulfill it in the future.

BACKGROUND TO THE INVASION OF UKRAINE

Ukraine was one of the dissolved Soviet Union's sixteen republics. It gained independence following the demise of the communist state in the early 1990s. It is a significant crossroads between Russia and eastern Europe, and its location makes it a strategic nation for both Europe and Russia. Beyond its western borders are states that were once under the influence of the former Soviet Union, such as Poland, Romania, and the Czech Republic. The demise of the Soviet Union resulted in Western capitalist dominance. The weaker former Soviet Union, now Russia, proceeded on a path of political and economic changes until Vladimir Putin was elected President of Russia. Meanwhile, Ukraine and other former Soviet Union spheres of influence have adopted a capitalist model of economic management as well as a western style of democracy. Some have joined the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). Putin's relationship with the West has been relatively mixed: more cooperation and rivalry at first, and much later, unambiguous competition with minimal cooperation on certain critical topics. The restoration of Russia's

magnificent past, which he is determined to restore, is central to his temperament. This is exacerbated by Russia's growing isolation as neighboring countries join the EU, NATO, or are more pro-western than ever. Ukraine is one such country, and its predicament is exacerbated by Russia's strategic importance in terms of access to Europe and the Black Sea in the south. With this circumstance, Russia's relationship with the West has now deteriorated to the point where it is speculated that the cold war has returned, as it did in 1945 and 1989. Russia has consistently denounced the growing accession of former communist countries in Europe to NATO. Ukraine was one of the most recent to apply, which Russia blamed for its invasion. President Vladimir Putin sent 200,000 troops to Ukraine on February 24, 2022. The aim was for Russia to take control of Kyiv, the capital, within a few days and overthrow the government (Kirby, 2022). However, a year has passed since the invasion, and this has not yet occurred.

What propelled Russian invasion?

Following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Ukraine's governments have been either pro-Western or pro-Russian. Moscow is aware of Ukraine's tendency to align itself with the West, and it desires that nations on its borders prioritize closer relations with Russia over the West. However, in 2014, the pro-Russian leader was chased into exile by Ukrainians. Putin retaliated by dispatching special operations commandos to capture the Crimean Peninsula in Russia's south, near the Black Sea, which was then annexed by Russia. Moscow has since provided support to rebels in the eastern regions of Ukraine (Goncharenko, 2022). Thousands of people have been slain in eastern Ukraine since 2014, and as long as Putin can influence what Ukraine is capable of doing, he will achieve his strategic goal (Hodges, 2022). With the successful invasion of Crimea in 2014 and the unstable portions of the east, Russia laid the groundwork for believing it might take over Kyiv in 2022. The lack of a strong response to the takeover of Crimea may have prompted the latest invasion. There was an evident confidence in Moscow that the Russian army might invade Kyiv in a matter of days and install a puppet, assassinate, or imprison the president in Russia (Goncharenko, 2022). As has been stated numerous times, Russia does not need to conquer Ukraine's vast area before achieving its goal. Ukraine is a large country, and it was stated that Russian forces would not need to be positioned to conquer the entire country. This was the belief immediately prior to the invasion that the army could not successfully roll over all of Ukraine and that they did not want to or need to in order to achieve their goal (Hodges, 2022). One of Russia's goals in Ukraine in 2022 is to acquire access to crucial resources that the EU requires to meet its climate change commitments, and the use of force and the instrumentalization of war are central to Moscow's approach (Lazard, 2022). It is also emphasized that the war in Ukraine may be a single piece of a much larger puzzle put up by Russia and that this must be viewed in conjunction with Russian operations in Africa, Central Asia, Latin America, and East Asia (Lazard, 2022). It can also be evaluated in the context of a world in transition that is being destabilized by climate disturbances and geo-economics' competition (Lazard, 2022). It is well known that Russia pays little attention to climate change. President Putin vacillated between denying climate change, downplaying it, and portraying Russia as a climate-positive actor assisting with carbon offset markets (Lazard, 2022).

In terms of energy, Russia's outlook was defined by two positions. One is that hydrocarbons will continue to be vital to the global economy, with Asia driving the majority of demand. The second point is that Russia recognized European efforts to transition to a renewable-based energy mix that relied on crucial raw resources such as rare earths (Lazard, 2022). Furthermore, Russia seeks to reestablish Soviet-era industrial and export power in crucial resources. According to Putin, regaining this capability is critical to ensure that Russia can tip the global balance of power in its favor, compete with China, and damage the transatlantic connection (Lazard, 2022). According to some authors, Russia's economic diversification strategy, national security strategy, and regional strategies are all tied to a single goal: improving Russia's military and defensive position while maintaining geo-economics' importance (Lazard, 2022). The author goes on to say that Russia's goal necessitates three steps: developing its domestic industrial base, focusing on resource-rich countries with which it can either control or cooperate closely on its own terms, and

forming alliances with countries around the world that own resources complementary to those Russia can directly control (Lazard, 2022). Ukraine's position in this is that its mineral wealth is believed to be worth more than \$7 trillion. Ukraine and the EU signed a raw materials strategic agreement in July 2021 to develop and diversify supply chains for crucial resources (Lazard, 2022). The cooperation was created to help the EU decarbonize and to strengthen ties between the EU and Ukraine. However, many of Ukraine's resources are found in the country's east, which Russia currently controls. Russia's goal is to acquire access to the resources that the EU requires to carry out its climate law, which is a key component of European social pacts under the Green Deal (Lazard, 2022). Russia's strategy revolves around the use of force and the instrumentalization of conflict and war. Such a trend may be seen all around the world, not just in Ukraine. The Wagner Group, an unofficially linked Kremlin mercenary business whose owner also manages extractive corporations like Lobaye Invest, is now present in African countries with major mineral resources, including Mozambique, Madagascar, the Central African Republic, and Mali (Lazard, 2022). Even more impressively, Russia is forming new defense alliances in Cameroon and Zimbabwe, including topographic and hydrological studies (Lazard, 2022).

Putin is perceived as leveraging history to shape Russia's place in a climate-disrupted future. It is about rewriting history, namely in Ukraine, to justify occupation and conflict. In Africa, the traumas of history—colonialism and imperialism—are being used to destroy African-European ties (Lazard, 2022). Putin seeks access to resources and zones of power behind these tales. His strategic purpose, among other things, is to play on various European dependencies, including future ones (Lazard, 2022). He recognized something that the EU did not: the energy transition is a geostrategic issue (Lazard, 2022). Putin also wants to prevent Ukraine, the continent's second-largest country, from joining forces with Europe's democracies. What motivates Putin is a fear of Ukraine's independence, a fear that a functioning, successful, prosperous democracy in Ukraine will give people in Russia the idea that they, too, can enjoy what Ukraine enjoys and rise up against his autocratic rule (Daalder, 2022). There was also speculation that if Putin only captured a portion of eastern Ukraine, he would demonstrate that the West could not stop him. It would be his primary goal to be able to come and go as he pleases (Hodges, 2022).

There was also the election of a pro-Western government in Kyiv, which some have said was one of the reasons for the 2022 invasion.

Russia's form of attacks

Massing artillery on Ukraine's borders in preparation for an invasion was one of the first actions taken, but it was not the only method of attack used when the invasion began. The opening gambit was expected to be a series of cyberstrikes aimed at neutralizing decision-making authority so that the president and chief of staff would not comprehend exactly what was going on (Hodges, 2022). Cyberattacks had already defaced dozens of Ukraine's government's official websites before the tanks crossed the border. Even this was considered minor in comparison to the potential harm to banking, transportation, and electrical infrastructure. The Russians were willing to utilize cyber-attacks to destroy all societal systems as long as it aided their cause (Hodges, 2022). Russia's conflict, which began in February 2022 and stretched 350 miles from Belarus to the Black Sea, had been reduced to a 45-mile-wide assault on cities in the Donbas region by July 2022. This and other indications show that President Vladimir Putin is restricting his military objectives and will settle for control of four provinces in southern and eastern Ukraine (Glantz, 2022). Nonetheless, Putin's ambition appears to be unchanged, and he is willing to achieve it gradually (Glantz, 2022). On June 29, Putin announced that the "ultimate aim" of Russia's war in Ukraine is the liberation of the Donbas, the defense of its people, and the establishment of conditions that would ensure Russia's security. This was in contrast to the goals he declared in the early days of his resumed battle. At the time, Putin stated that his goal was unconditional consideration for Russia's legitimate security interests, including acknowledgment of Russia's sovereignty over Crimea, achievement of the Ukrainian state's demilitarization and denazification goals, and maintenance of its neutral position. The Russian military effort in April to seize

Ukraine's four eastern and southern regions, Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia, and Kherson, also gave the impression of a restricted target (Glantz, 2022). This limited gain would nonetheless result in a triumph for Putin, satisfying at least one of his initial declared goals of capturing the Donbas region. It would also offer Russia a strategically useful overland transport route to the Russian-annexed Crimean Peninsula, allowing Russia to provide critical water supplies from the mainland to Crimea (Glantz, 2022). Ukrainian forces drove Russian soldiers out of Kharkiv and launched counter-offensives in the south, towards Kherson. Ukraine made Russia pay for every inch of territory in Luhansk Oblast (province), buying time for key Western artillery to arrive (Glantz, 2022). Ukraine continues to launch resistance operations in territories already occupied by Russia. Nonetheless, Russia has made sluggish progress and has indicated that it intends to continue. After Russian troops finished occupying Luhansk in July, they increased the shelling of cities in Donetsk province. Putin ordered them to improve their fighting capabilities, and Kremlin-backed separatist commanders in Luhansk and Donetsk urged and promised additional advances against Ukrainian government forces (Glantz, 2022). Russian forces in the south focused on repelling Ukrainian counteroffensives in Russian-occupied Kherson and Zaporizhzhia (Glantz, 2022).

Nonetheless, there are indications that Russia's objectives have not changed. The political and administrative procedures Russia is taking that indicate ambitions to merge these provinces into the Russian Federation (Glantz, 2022) are indicative of Russia's longer-term goals. Moscow has placed leaders in all four. Donetsk and Luhansk leaders held a referendum on joining Russia. Kherson's Russian-appointed administration made a direct request to Putin for inclusion in Russia. In June 2022, Russian parliamentarians proposed the formation of a new Russian district comprised of Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia. These have since been met. On the administrative front, the mayor of Donetsk declared that the city's phone system would be changed from Ukrainian to Russian. Russian occupation officials are also allegedly altering Ukrainian school curricula to Russian, linking Ukrainian cell phones to Russian networks, issuing Russian passports to Ukrainians, and building puppet governments in controlled territory (Glantz, 2022). These administrative and political actions give little reason to believe that Russia's tactical regrouping and reduction of battlefield focus mean the conflict is coming to an end (Glantz, 2022). They show that Russia is unwilling to accept an independent and autonomous Ukraine. Russia stated on July 5 that maintaining Ukrainian neutrality — military, economic, and political — remained a Russian war goal. This means that Ukraine would have to abandon not only its objective of joining NATO but also its goal of joining the European Union (EU); Russian official media insist that Russia will never let "Ukraine or its remnants" join the EU (Glantz, 2022). When combined with Putin's assertion that Ukraine is not a real state, this suggests that Putin and the Russian government are prepared for a long campaign, absorbing and digesting Ukraine piece by piece (Glantz, 2022). Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, Russian officials' views on Ukraine have been conveyed in speeches and written theories, indicating that they believe Ukraine is and must remain in Russia's sphere of "privileged interest." Russian activities since the Soviet Union's demise show that if its declared goals are first blocked, Russia will re-engage in the conflict with even more vigor (Glantz, 2022).

Overview of Russia's intention in Ukraine

Perhaps the invasion of Crimea and the circumstances surrounding it are a good place to start looking at Russia's approach. According to this article, the 2022 invasion is an extension of the 2014 invasion of Crimea, and it may be the first stage in assessing other elements that may later come into play in the 2022 invasion. Russia's actions in Ukraine have an overriding tendency. President Putin refers to the invasion as a special military operation from the start (Kirby, 2022). He refused to admit that a full-fledged conflict had displaced millions of Ukrainians. He stated that his goal was to demilitarize and de-Nazificate Ukraine (Kirby, 2022). He went on to say that his purpose was to safeguard Ukrainians who had been subjected to eight years of intimidation and genocide at the hands of Ukraine's government. This is a claim based on

how Russia chooses to see Ukraine, which it has always considered its land since the 9th century, when it was invaded by the Russians (Kirby, 2022). Its political elite never felt Ukraine was or should be a sovereign state. Furthermore, the Russian leadership sees the 2022 invasion as an effort to prevent NATO from having a foothold in Ukraine, which it regards as an eternal asset. The other objective Russia stated was to make Ukraine neutral (Kirby, 2022). As a result, it devised a strategy to destabilize Kyiv's democratically elected administration. When Russian troops entered Ukraine on February 24, 2022, their primary goal was to stay on the outskirts of Kyiv, but Ukrainians blocked all entry routes. One month after the invasion, war trends revealed that Russia was failing to achieve its initial goals in Ukraine. The Russian leader revised his goals while asserting that the first phase was nearly complete (Kirby, 2022). Russia's initial great intention of taking over Ukraine was eventually scaled back. Indeed, its forces announced and appeared pleased with a series of land grabs where it was easier for them to do so. Moscow's soldiers retreated from the areas surrounding Kyiv and Chernihiv, but reassembled in the north-east. At this moment, Moscow proclaimed that the liberation of Donbas was its primary goal. These sites are located in Ukraine's two industrial regions of Luhansk and Donetsk. Months later, in November 2022, Russia was forced to withdraw from the southern city of Kherson due to the destruction of supply lines and the disruption of command systems (Zaluzhny, 2022).

Russia's achievements in the Donbas region were not the consequence of the February 2022 invasion. According to Kirby (2022), Russian proxy forces had already conquered a third of Donbas in 2014 in a battle that had now become mostly frozen. By late March 2022, the forces had taken control of the majority of Luhansk but only around half of Donetsk. One of Putin's few major wins was the recapture of the damaged port city of Mariupol in Donetsk in May (Kirby, 2022). This provided Russia with a land corridor from its border to Crimea, the Ukrainian peninsula captured by Russia in 2014. Russian soldiers pondered capturing additional land in the south. They discussed taking land along the Black Sea coast beyond Odesa in order to establish a breakaway entity in Moldova (Minnekayev, 2022). By early July, Russia's President Vladimir Putin stated that his troops had complete control of Luhansk. When considering Russia's aims, it is also worth noting that Putin's message has shifted since February 2022. First, he began to repeatedly blame the Ukrainian government for the invasion. According to Kirby (2022), Russia's president disputed Ukraine's independence, claiming in a lengthy 2021 article that Russians and Ukrainians had been one people since the late 9th century. This was also stated in his two pre-war speeches. In them, Putin accused Kyiv of attempting to eradicate the Russian language and NATO of attempting to establish a foothold in Ukraine. He claimed Ukraine was anti-Russian (Minnekayev, 2022). In the fourth quarter of 2022, Putin's narrative shifted to blame the invasion on the West. He claimed that the West was attempting to weaken, divide, and ultimately destroy his country. Stating further that the war was caused by Kyiv's desire to possess nuclear weapons (Kirby, 2022). Meanwhile, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, an independent Ukraine voluntarily turned up all nuclear weapons on its borders (Kirby, 2022). Putin threatened to use all available means to protect Russia and keep the occupied regions. "We will certainly use all weapon systems available to us," he says. This isn't a ruse" (Kirby, 2022).

When the tide turned

From July 2022 on, a shift in the war's tide was visible, with Ukraine regaining territory it had previously lost. This was largely due to the arrival of Western weaponry, specifically American HIMARS missiles. This had an impact on Russia's logistics centers and arms stockpiles in the country's east. There was also a Ukrainian counteroffensive in Kherson's southern region. Because of the ease with which Russian supply lines and personnel became targets, Moscow's forces began to launch missiles into Ukrainian territory. They attacked individuals and civil infrastructure, such as power supply infrastructure. As a result of the Ukrainian troops' resistance, Putin was forced to order a partial mobilization of 300,000 troops by September 2022. This violated his earlier pledge to the Russians. The mobilization was primarily intended to reinforce a 1,000-kilometer front line in the east. As a direct result of this call, many Russians moved to

neighboring nations to avoid the war. With the changes on the battlefield, Putin proclaimed the annexation of two eastern regions and two others in the south: Kherson and Zaporizhzhia. However, Russia did not have complete authority over these two. He stated that the two areas would always be part of Russia. However, Russia withdrew from Kherson, the sole regional capital captured in its 2022 war (Kirby, 2022). Still attempting to recover control of the war's direction, Moscow replaced its Ukraine war commander with a new person, General Sergei Surovikin. He was previously the commander of Russian forces in Syria, where his relentless bombardment resulted in a victory for the Syrian government over opposition forces.

Under Surovikin's leadership, Russia took a different tactic in October 2022, destroying Ukraine's civilian infrastructure. Air attacks destroyed or damaged approximately 40% of its power system. This was Moscow's reaction to its defeat on the battlefield. The Kremlin's new goal was to undermine civilian morale (Kirby, 2022). Cities throughout Ukraine have been impacted. When Russia lost Kherson, 30,000 Russian troops fled from the right bank of the Dnipro River. This contributed to prior failures, emphasizing the fact that this was a failed invasion (Kirby, 2022).

Late in September 2022, Ukrainian forces liberated Lyman, a strategic hub taken by the Russians four months earlier. Ukraine's accomplishments also included the sinking of Russia's flagship Black Sea battle cruiser, the Moskva, in April 2022. Russian forces were forced to flee their stronghold on Snake Island in the Black Sea weeks later. An explosion in Crimea in October 2022 destroyed a bridge across the Kerch Strait. Following the annexation of Crimea in 2014, this bridge was built. The explosion crippled Russian supply lines, and a Ukrainian drone attack on Russia's Black Sea Fleet in Sevastopol followed. It is worth noting that the Russian leader has distanced himself from these losses. It was a hint that he was finding it increasingly difficult to explain to the Russians this unexpected conclusion.

Many experts predicted that Russia would win its war against Ukraine quickly before the invasion. However, from February to December 2022, Moscow failed to demonstrate its superiority in the air and at sea (Goncharenko, 2022). When Russia began gathering forces near Ukraine's border, it was expected that Kyiv would fall within a few days of an invasion (Goncharenko, 2022). However, they were stopped on the outskirts of Kyiv by the Ukrainian army and forced to withdraw. Such Russian miscalculations have continued since the invasions. Instead of a swift takeover of Ukraine, Russia's President Putin appeared to be preparing his country for a long conflict in early December 2022 (Goncharenko, 2022). This was unavoidable because, before the invasion, all military and political indicators were stacked in favor of a rapid Russian triumph. One example was Russia's apparent air supremacy. In this regard, the idea was that Russia would rapidly achieve air sovereignty by removing both the Ukrainian Air Force and air defenses. This was in response to what had previously occurred in eastern Ukraine. When war broke out in the eastern Donbas region in 2014, Ukraine lost a large number of planes and helicopters in the first few months and chose not to utilize those that remained. The Ukrainian Air Force was nearly destroyed (Goncharenko, 2022).

In 2022, things were different. The Russian Air Force is superior in terms of size and technology, but Ukraine maintains aircraft and helicopters despite numerous missile attacks on military airports, and its air defenses are stronger (Goncharenko, 2022). Claims are made by Ukrainian sources that Russia has lost hundreds of aircraft and helicopters. Russia has since resorted to using drones and missiles in the war, but these too are intercepted effectively by Ukrainian air defenses, even though this is the outcome of increasing Western aid. In terms of sea power, Russia is superior to Ukraine. Nonetheless, using this in the south of Ukraine to any significant advantage has proved difficult. Russia conducted training maneuvers on the seized Crimean Peninsula in 2021, landing troops. However, following the 2022 invasion, landing on Ukrainian soil has proven impossible due to Ukrainian troops, making it a perilous endeavor. In 2022, Russia's Black Sea fleet experienced losses. In April 2022, Ukrainian missiles damaged and sank the flagship warship Moskva. A month earlier, the landing ship Saratov drowned in the Sea of Azov after being

hit by a Ukrainian missile in the port of Berdyansk (Goncharenko, 2022). The warships of the Black Sea Fleet have since maintained a larger distance from the coast, which is still under Kyiv's authority.

What helped Ukraine?

Internal and external concerns have aided Ukraine and helped defeat Russia's initial aim to invade Ukraine. Internally, the political leadership's boldness has been cited as a crucial component. Perhaps the significance of this would have been better understood if Ukraine's political leaders had left when Russian tanks massed on the outskirts of Kyiv. But the leadership stayed firm and organized the nation to fight back. The Ukrainian people's and soldiers' bravery have also been recognized. Excerpt: For the most vulnerable part of the population, the most capable men and women have supported their government and volunteered to fight to keep Ukraine's independence from Russia. Ukrainians on the frontlines develop weaponry and drones only to keep the Russians at bay in critical places. From an external standpoint, Russia controlled much of the territory it captured in 2014, including the coastline corridor from Crimea to the Russian border, in the first quarter of 2023. However, as previously said, the war did not go as planned (Kirby, 2022), and Ukraine was able to maintain its independence and ability to oppose Russia. The tough resistance Russia encountered in the early months of the conflict ensured that Russia incurred significant losses in both troops and material. As a result, Moscow was forced to order the partial mobilization of hundreds of thousands of Russians. The high level of reliance on mercenaries in the form of the Kremlin-linked Wagner Group demonstrates that this has yet to make much of a difference. The mobilization effort has yet to have a significant influence on the battlefield.

After the first several weeks of the invasion, the state of Russia's war materials was also called into doubt. Massive losses of land and air assets prompted a shift in strategy, including the deployment of drones instead of fighter jets in Ukraine's bombing operations. Events revealed that Russia's original strategy did not include the deployment of drones, necessitating that it began obtaining drones from Iran. The numbers, as well as the speed with which these drones are delivered, have played a role in Russia's ability to carry out its goals. As a result of this circumstance, Russia's combat operations were considerably impeded until July 2022. There was an attempt to take Bakhmut in the Donetsk region, but only minimal gains were made in the first quarter of 2023, indicating how much of the Russian forces' aim had been realized.

There was also the unsuccessful implied purpose that by invading Ukraine, NATO would be forced to withdraw and other states on Europe's eastern frontiers would be hesitant to join NATO. This has not been the case since countries such as Sweden and Finland have asked to join. Following the invasion, these countries have drawn closer to NATO and have campaigned for NATO to provide major assistance to Ukraine. By early 2023, some of Europe's eastern states had officially supplied aid to Ukraine, and they had also taken in Ukrainians escaping the war. Other external entities have played roles that have led to the current situation of the war in Ukraine, namely:

North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO)

Members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization have been critical to Ukraine's ability to conduct the war and effectively confront the Russians. NATO is an alliance of European and North American countries. It provides a unique link between these two continents, allowing them to consult and collaborate in the fields of defense and security, as well as execute global crisis-management operations. NATO is a post-World War II alliance whose mission is to ensure the independence and security of its members by political and military means. NATO, from a political standpoint, promotes democratic values and allows members to consult and collaborate on defense and security issues in order to solve difficulties, establish confidence, and, in the long run, prevent conflict (NATO, 2023). NATO is committed to peaceful conflict resolution. If diplomatic efforts fail, it possesses the military capability to conduct crisis-management operations (NATO, 1949). These are carried out under NATO's founding treaty's collective defense clause (Article 5 of the

Washington Treaty) or under a United Nations mandate, either alone or in collaboration with other countries and international organizations.

Security is regarded as critical to the well-being of its members. NATO ensures its members' freedom and security through political and military measures. NATO adheres to the idea that an assault on one or more of its members is considered an attack on all. This is the collective defense principle stated in Article 5 of the Washington Treaty. Article 5 has only been utilized once so far, in response to the 9/11 terrorist attacks in the United States in 2001 (NATO, 2023).

Political Support: Since Russia's invasion of Ukraine, NATO has denounced Russia's ruthless and unprovoked campaign of aggression against Ukraine in the strongest terms possible. The invasion was deemed a breach of international security and stability as well as a violation of international law. NATO Allies urged Russia to halt the conflict and withdraw all of its forces from Ukraine, to completely observe international humanitarian law, and to enable safe and unfettered humanitarian access and assistance to all people in need (NATO, 2023). NATO has taken a position in full support of Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity within its internationally recognized borders since Russia's invasion of Crimea and destabilization of eastern Ukraine in 2014 (NATO, 2023). The Allies do not recognize and condemn Russia's takeover of Crimea. NATO also criticizes Russia's formal annexation of four Ukrainian areas, Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia, which began in September 2022. Following Russia's annexation of Crimea, NATO allies resolved in 2014 to stop all practical civilian and military cooperation with Russia while maintaining political and military channels of communication open. Since Russia's full-fledged invasion of Ukraine in February 2022, the Allies have imposed heavy sanctions on Russia in an effort to deprive the Kremlin's war machine of funding (NATO, 2023). Allies are refining these restrictions in order to put more pressure on Moscow, believing that the initiatives will make it more difficult for Russia to rebuild its tanks, manufacture missiles, and finance its war. Since 2014, the NATO-Ukraine Commission (NUC) has held frequent consultations in light of the direct challenges to Ukraine's territorial integrity, political independence, and security (NATO, 2023). The NUC convened for exceptional meetings in response to Russia's use of military force against Ukrainian ships near the Kerch Strait in November 2018, as well as Russia's threat of a military buildup in April 2021. Other emergency NUC sessions were convened in January and February 2022 at NATO Headquarters, focusing on Russia's military buildup and unjustified invasion of Ukraine (NATO, 2023). NATO's political strategy remains robust, and it is critical to its operations in Ukraine. Most decisions are reached at this level, and corresponding steps are implemented as a result.

Practical Support: NATO's practical assistance to Ukraine comprises the Comprehensive Assistance Package. The Alliance promptly increased its practical aid to Ukraine. NATO Foreign Ministers agreed on measures to improve Ukraine's ability to provide for its own security after Russia annexed Crimea in 2014 (NATO, 2023). They also resolved to expand their practical assistance to Ukraine based on significant enhancements to existing cooperation programs as well as the development of significant new programs. In 2016, during the NATO Summit held in Warsaw, the organization's efforts were incorporated into the Comprehensive Assistance Package (CAP). The CAP aimed to assist Ukraine in enhancing its security capabilities and implementing a variety of reforms based on NATO standards, Euro-Atlantic principles, and best practices (NATO, 2023). NATO assisted Ukraine in transforming its security and defense sectors through the CAP, giving strategic advice through the NATO Representation in Ukraine and practical assistance through a variety of capacity-building programs and projects. Through these programs, NATO boosted Ukraine's security and defense sector's capacity and resilience, as well as its ability to fight hybrid threats. Ukraine and practical assistance through a variety of capacity-building programs and projects. Through these programs, NATO boosted Ukraine's security and defense sector's capacity and resilience, as well as its ability to fight hybrid threats.

NATO and its allies have also significantly contributed to capability development, particularly through training and education as well as the deployment of materiel (NATO, 2023).

Since 2014, several trust funds have been established. These trust funds provide funding to support capability development and long-term capacity development in critical sectors. Active Trust Fund projects include: Command, Control, Communications, and Computers (C4), which assists Ukraine in reorganizing and modernizing its C4 structures and capabilities; and Medical Rehabilitation and Professional Development Programme, which assists in the development of civilians working in Ukraine's defense and security institutions (NATO, 2023). Allies strengthened the CAP in 2022 by launching steps to give Ukraine immediate, short-term, non-lethal military aid, as well as structures to increase NATO's long-term support. Longer term, the Alliance is striving to support Ukraine's efforts to rebuild and reform after the war. As a result, the reinforced CAP includes actions to improve and modernize Ukraine's defense and security institutions (NATO, 2023). Allies have also promised to assist Ukraine in transitioning from Soviet-era equipment to current NATO equipment and standards, thereby improving interoperability with Allied forces (NATO, 2023). NATO members delivered Ukraine air defense systems, which helped reverse the tide against Russia's invasion (NATO, 2023).

The United States

As the world's most powerful military power, the United States has remained ideologically and morally opposed to the former Communist Soviet Union and Russia under President Putin. The United States sees itself as a defender and supporter of democracy and freedom, while Russia sees itself as a totalitarian regime hostile to freedom. For this and other reasons, it has opposed the invasion of Ukraine from 2014 to 2022. Indeed, the White House saw Putin's incursion as a test of Ukraine's devotion to independence as well as a test for America and the rest of the globe (White House, 2023). Since February 2022, the United States has offered crucial assistance to the people of Ukraine, working closely with the Ukrainian government to ensure that they have what they require (White House, 2023). President Joe Biden met with President Zelensky on a regular basis, receiving him at the White House and visiting Kyiv. The United States has taken the lead in providing security assistance in the form of air defense systems that have intercepted Russian strikes, armored vehicles, and financial and humanitarian aid—all of which have assisted Ukrainians in maintaining access to basic amenities such as healthcare and heat (White House, 2023). The United States is Ukraine's top military aid supplier, having committed \$30 billion since the Biden administration began. Since February 2022, \$29.3 billion in assistance has been granted (Commons Library, 2023). The United States mobilized the international community to speak out and take a position against Russia, imposing the most extensive coordinated sanctions and export control actions ever imposed on a major economy (Commons Library, 2023). In response to the Kremlin's worldwide economic disruptions, the US has initiated programs that have stabilized energy markets and food supplies. Among the concrete initiatives made to support Ukraine are the following (White House, 2023):

Security Assistance: Security assistance has been offered by the United States, which has delivered artillery ammunition, tank ammo, and rounds of small arms ammunition, as well as helicopters, unmanned coastal defense vessels, and counter-UAV systems and equipment.

Humanitarian Assistance: The United States responded rapidly to Ukraine's humanitarian catastrophe, delivering more than \$1.9 billion in aid to Ukrainians in need, including more than 13 million individuals forced to evacuate their homes. Democracy, Human Rights, and Anti-Corruption Assistance In March 2022, the United States announced the European Democratic Resilience Initiative (EDRI) to safeguard human rights in Ukraine and its neighbors (White House, 2023). It provided nearly \$220 million to Ukraine through EDRI to support media freedom and allow Ukrainian media outlets to continue operating during the war, to counter disinformation, to increase the safety and security of activists and vulnerable groups, to strengthen democratic and anti-corruption institutions,

and to support accountability for human rights violations and violations of international law

Holding Russia Accountable: Justice and accountability are essential tenets of the United States' Ukraine policy. It takes initiative to bring perpetrators, human rights abusers, and war criminals to justice. It has been concluded that the Russian military and other Russian authorities committed crimes against humanity in Ukraine. The US has also imposed harsh visa restrictions on Russian military personnel and others involved in human rights violations relating to Russia's war (White House, 2023). The US backs a number of international accountability mechanisms, including the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on Ukraine, the UN Human Rights Monitoring Mission in Ukraine, the Moscow Mechanism of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, and the Joint Investigative Team on Ukraine.

Economic Measures Against Russia: The United States and more than 30 allies and partners devised the most comprehensive package of sanctions and export controls ever imposed on a major economy. These steps are preventing Russia from gaining access to crucial inputs and advanced technologies, limiting its capacity to pay and fight its illegitimate war (White House, 2023).

Energy Assistance and Security: The US and its friends and partners provide energy support, such as restoring power, heating homes, and allowing Ukrainians to focus on defending their sovereignty. It offers crucial electricity equipment to assist Ukraine in making emergency repairs to its power system and strengthening the grid's reliability in the face of Russia's targeted strikes. It also collaborates with Ukraine to accelerate its energy transition and establish a system independent of Russian energy. Economic Assistance: The United States has disbursed \$13 billion in grant funding for Ukraine's budget support, and it is about to disburse another \$9.9 billion, recently approved by Congress, to ensure the Ukrainian government can continue to meet the critical needs of its citizens and provide basic services as it confronts Russia's continued aggression (White House, 2023).

The UK

The Russian government's campaign in Ukraine was opposed by the UK from the start. The UK government is sending economic, humanitarian, and defensive military aid to Ukraine, as well as putting new sanctions on Russia and Belarus, both of which support Russia's conflict. Defense and security cooperation between the United Kingdom and Ukraine began soon after Ukraine's independence in 1991 (Commons Library, 2023). When Russia annexed Crimea in 2014, this intensified, but it mostly took the form of training and bilateral distribution of non-lethal military equipment (Commonslibrary, 2023). After Russia launched combat activities against Ukraine on February 24, 2022, bilateral military support increased. The United Kingdom is the second-largest donor. It has already contributed £2.3 billion in military aid to Ukraine and has promised to match this support in 2023. The United Kingdom has been the most vocal in its support for the Ukrainian people and armed forces (Landsman, 2023).

In addition, the UK is hosting a training program (Operation Interflex), which is funded by various allies and aims to teach 10,000 new and existing Ukrainian personnel in 120 days. The United Kingdom has committed to training Ukrainian fast jet pilots but has stated that combat fighter aircraft will not be given in the near future (Commons Library, 2023). The argument that the UK should actively support Kyiv enjoys widespread political backing. People in the United Kingdom have donated over £400 million to charities working in the country to assist fleeing Ukrainians; they fly Ukrainian flags; and they have personally contributed by housing over 25,000 Ukrainian refugees and welcoming them into schools and communities (Commonslibrary, 2023). British businesses have been providing humanitarian and civilian aid as well as military aid, with many contributing financially and personnel volunteering to face personal risks. And many corporations went above and beyond legal requirements to disengage promptly (and at great expense), expressing their desire to be "on the right side of history" (Landsman, 2023).

The EU

Following the 2022 invasion, European Union leaders and institutions condemned Russian aggression and violations of international law, demanding that Russia immediately cease military operations and unconditionally withdraw all forces and military equipment from Ukraine's entire territory (EU, 2023). Since the beginning of the aggression, the EU and its financial institutions have mobilized €37.8 billion in macro-financial assistance, budget support, emergency assistance, crisis response, and humanitarian aid to help Ukraine's overall economic, social, and financial resilience. For the first time, the EU is also funding the purchase and transport of weapons and other equipment to an under-attack country (EU, 2023). At the same time, the EU imposed unprecedented sanctions on the Kremlin as well as the Lukashenko dictatorship in Belarus. The sanctions imposed on Russia are the most severe in the European Union's history. The EU has barred key Russian institutions from participating in SWIFT, the world's leading financial messaging system for cross-border payments (EU, 2023). The EU prohibits Russia's central bank transactions. It restricts the provision of any credit rating services as well as the provision of certain business-related services to the Russian government, such as accounting, auditing, statutory audit, bookkeeping, tax consulting services, business and management consulting, and public relations services. Sanctions on airspace and transportation have been imposed, including the closure of EU airspace to all Russian-owned, Russian-registered, or Russian-controlled aircraft, including private jets. They will no longer be permitted to land, take off, or fly over EU territory (EU, 2023). The EU has barred Russian-flagged ships from entering EU ports. It imposed an export embargo on items and technology used in the aviation and space industries. It prohibits Russian oil imports in the energy sector. The EU also restricted new investments in the Russian energy sector and imposed broad export restrictions on energy-related equipment, technology, and services. All types of Russian coal are prohibited from being imported. In terms of technology, the EU has set limitations on the export of dual-use goods and technology, as well as prohibitions on the export of specific commodities and technology that could contribute to Russia's technological advancement in the defense and security sectors. There are specific export limitations in areas where Russia is vulnerable due to its reliance on EU goods. The export of drone engines, camouflage gear, and other items is prohibited. In the industrial sector, the EU implemented trade restrictions on iron and steel, costing Russia around €3.3 billion in lost export earnings (EU, 2023).

Members of the European Union (EU) and the World Trade Organization (WTO) refuse Russian products and services preferential status in EU markets. The EU also prohibits imports of cement, rubber products, wood, alcohol (including vodka), liquor, and high-end seafood (including caviar). In terms of media, the EU has suspended Russian media outlets' broadcasting activities. The measures will be in force until the aggression against Ukraine ceases (EU, 2023). A total of 1,473 persons and 205 entities are subject to restrictive measures, which include an asset freeze and a prohibition on making cash available to the named individuals and entities. Furthermore, a travel ban prohibits the specified individuals from entering or transiting through EU territory.

The EU is giving lethal armaments to a third country as part of its help to Ukraine for the first time in its history (EU, 2023). This totaled €3.6 billion as of January 23, 2023. A total of €668 million has been made available for humanitarian aid programs to assist populations affected by Ukraine's war. Another €330 million is allocated to an emergency assistance program, which aids in the provision of basic goods and services such as education, healthcare, and food (EU, 2023).

Furthermore, EU leaders unanimously agreed to award Ukraine candidate status. Ukraine must now meet the conditions outlined in the European Commission's opinion on its application in areas such as anti-corruption and the rule of law. Ukraine formally applied for membership in the European Union on February 28, 2022 (EU, 2023). Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission, traveled to Kyiv on February 2-3, 2023, accompanied by 15 Commissioners, for the first ever meeting between the

College and the Ukrainian Government. The summit reviewed the EU's ongoing assistance to Ukraine in a variety of sectors, including financial, humanitarian, energy, budgetary, and diplomatic outreach. Furthermore, it examined Ukraine's reform initiatives to get closer to the EU and outlined additional steps to strengthen sectoral collaboration (EU, 2023).

Other Players

There are various other parties whose actions ensure that Russia's basic aims in Ukraine are not realized. The Japanese leader will visit Kyiv in March 2023 and pledge his country's assistance. Except for Belarus, all of the eastern European countries have directly or indirectly supported Ukraine. In March 2023, Poland agreed to supply fighter jets to Ukraine. This was in response to Germany's actions. Turkey has intervened in a series of agreements with Russia to ensure that grains from Ukraine are shipped to Africa and the Middle East via the Black Sea. Many countries in the Western Hemisphere have backed Russia's sanctions. In March, the International Criminal Court issued an arrest order for Putin for violations of human rights in Ukraine. This restricts the Russian President's ability to travel across the world. Overall, more nations around the world have expressed their opposition to Russia's invasion of Ukraine in 2022. The UN has attempted to strike a balance, but it has nonetheless condemned any act similar to what Russia did in Ukraine in 2022. The organization has also demanded an immediate and unconditional cessation of hostilities as well as access to aid for war victims.

Russia's failed strategy in Ukraine

A variety of elements must be considered when assessing how Russia's approach has fared in Ukraine. Perhaps it is worth emphasizing that no matter how flawed Russia's method was, it would still have achieved its main goals if the Ukrainians had not put up a strong fight. Ukrainian officials emphasized from the start of the war that they were willing to go to any length to defend national sovereignty and that western nations should only help with military weapons and in any other way they could. Apart from the role of external actors, this draws attention to the people of Ukraine, the leadership, and the support received from outside sources. The Ukrainian political leadership worked to counter the Russians from the start, employing the following strategies:

Appeal to the International Community for support and assistance

As soon as the war began, the Ukrainian leadership issued a strong plea to the world community for support and active help. President Zelensky addressed important institutions such as the United Nations, the European Union, and the African Union, urging them to view Ukraine's predicament as one that might happen to anybody. As a result, they needed to assist his country in its resistance struggle. He addressed MPs from the United Kingdom, the United States, the European Union, and many other countries. He was greeted warmly in each of these. As a result, most nations and organizations are sympathetic and have offered Ukraine aid in every manner they can. This has significantly boosted the morale of the Ukrainian army and people in their willingness to fight the Russians in whatever manner possible. Ukrainians' determination to fight is crucial to why Russia's aims in Ukraine have not been carried out as intended.

Volunteers from home and abroad

Volunteers who joined the Ukrainian army play an essential role as well. Many Ukrainians, both men and women, have volunteered to fight for their country. Many others, including those from other countries, were also trained. Some were sent to the United Kingdom and the United States for specialized training in the handling of aviation and artillery assets. They return to the battlefield after completing their training and contribute to the military effort. The army volunteers and people have been so fired up to fight this battle in a way that their adversary could not have been, considering that Russians have been rumored to escape rather than participate in the draft that Putin has called for. The Ukrainian army has also gained access to

more advanced weapons. As the situation in Ukraine progresses, so do the types of weapons delivered by foreign groups, particularly NATO members. Prior to a projected spring onslaught by both sides, the focus is currently on providing Ukraine with the capabilities to both defend their territory and reclaim ground currently under Russian control in the limited timeframe available. Some friends, however, are concerned that the introduction of increasingly sophisticated weaponry would intensify the battle (Landsman, 2023). The availability of advanced weapons has enabled the Ukrainians to debunk Russia's intentions in Ukraine. The Russians' unwillingness to negotiate is also a motivator for the Ukrainian leadership and people. Russia has made it plain that it will only speak on conditions acceptable to it and will not compromise on subjugating Kyiv. This has been recognized by world leaders, who would have served as facilitators and guarantors in any peace talks. In the end, international nations provide more support to Ukraine while imposing more sanctions on Moscow. This will remain a major aspect of the war and a barrier to Russia achieving its war objectives.

The role of foreign entities

The overwhelming backing from Britons has led to Russia's tactics in Ukraine being less effective. Under the leadership of former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson, the UK was among the first to announce its support for Ukrainians, and Johnson probably became Ukraine's most popular foreign leader. The question of why Britons are outraged by Putin's invasion and its humanitarian implications has been raised. While the United Kingdom is not alone in its support for Ukraine, why has it remained prominent in the country? This is a vital subject since the UK's support will have a significant impact on how the Russians fare in Ukraine. The competing arguments to keep the UK out of fear of offending Russia and to devote money to domestic issues were barely heard beyond social media (Landsman, 2023). The public does not believe that the invasion of Ukraine is to blame for the rising cost of living. There is also Britain's traditional conception of itself as a "moral" leader, and its history during the Cold War and since demonstrates that the UK has been active in a variety of wars around the world (Landsman, 2023). Even sharply opposing viewpoints on these issues can transcend traditional political divides. The storylines are "saving the world" and "projecting British power," both of which result in a more assertive position than many of Britain's Western partners (Landsman, 2023). The political establishment favors an "active and activist" foreign policy with a "Better World, Better Britain" slogan. This is framed within the framework of the so-called "rules-based international order." A foreign policy narrative in the United Kingdom focused on values rather than interests is unusual on a global scale. Some regard it as a legacy of Empire, while others see it as a result of Britain's continued permanent membership in the UN Security Council, which requires it to have an opinion on every important international issue (Landsman, 2023).

The more recent Cold War period, which required a national effort combining the UK's military, intelligence services, and diplomacy, has always placed the Soviet Union, and now Russia, in the British psyche. Following the Salisbury poisoning, which claimed a British life and posed a grave threat to a British city, Russia remains a familiar foe. Because Russia is the one that invades its neighbor, it simply adds another enemy to contend with (Landsman, 2023). Britain's firm stance on Russia's invasion of Ukraine has benefited the country's image (Landsman, 2023) and the political leaders who visit Kyiv on a regular basis. The irony is that the mood of Brexiteers and Remainers helps Britain remain a staunch backer of Ukraine. The UK is considered well on the world scene by both Brexiteer proponents of "Global Britain" and Remainers concerned about a perceived inward turn (Landsman, 2023). The UK's proximity to Ukraine should assist the UK's wider partnerships in Central and Eastern Europe in the future, as well as its ability to play a role in Ukraine's rehabilitation (Landsman, 2023). The US's assistance has played a significant role in Russia's largely poor outcome in Ukraine. There is proof that the US supplies the Ukrainian military with more than just arms. It also supplies intelligence, and the US actively engages in surveillance activities, as proven by its surveillance drone being shot down by a Russian plane over the Black Sea in March 2023. There is also bipartisan support for Ukraine in the United States, which suggests that long-term support for Kyiv is a possibility.

Other key bodies, such as the UN and the EU, have ensured that the Russians have not been able to achieve their original aims. The EU, in particular, has worked with the US to ensure that sanctions are implemented and that they limit Russia's capabilities. There is no indication that the EU will relent in supporting the US in enforcing sanctions, and this will continue to have an impact on Russian forces' activities. As things are, Moscow is increasingly looking to China, North Korea, and Iran, all of whom are sanctioned by the international community. The Chinese president, Xi, visited Moscow in March 2023, and while pledging support for Putin, he also suggested a peace plan that the Western nations mainly rejected. The leeway that EU sanctions give Moscow is limited, and this will continue to have an impact on its capacity to prosecute or achieve its initial aims in Ukraine. The scope of Russia's agenda in Ukraine is another element that may continue to impede success. The plot to overrun Kyiv, install a puppet government, or forcefully integrate Ukraine into Russia has failed. It cannot happen in a circumstance where the West is eager to back Ukraine, as happened in the 1960s when Moscow pushed its tanks into eastern European capitals with little opposition from western nations. Ukraine is less likely to fall into Russian hands because all of Moscow's former communist satellite nations have elected not to come under its influence any more. They back Ukraine's resistance effort because they fear becoming the next targets if it falls. The Russian aim in Ukraine is currently being portrayed as unattainable, but the battle could last a long time. Russia's actions appear to have accelerated the rush of several nations in that axis for NATO membership, which will continue to influence the war's trajectory. Russia's invasion prompted Sweden and Finland to formally ask to join the armed alliance. When Russia announced the annexation of four Ukrainian provinces in late September, Ukraine also announced its intention to pursue fast-track NATO membership.

Russia's internal condition has prompted its political leadership to pursue lofty goals such as Russia's status as an empire. This has been suggested as one of Putin's aims and a rationale for his invasion of Ukraine. He is said to regard himself as one of Russia's great leaders of the past, such as Alexander the Great. With the active opposition of Ukrainians and the knowledge of former satellite states in eastern Europe, the possibility of this aspiration being realized is low, but Russia and its leaders will continue to dream. Ukrainians are sure that Russia would always wish to subjugate them, and they are resolved not to allow Moscow to get away with this invasion. This is seen in their calls for more firearms, arguing that they are capable of defending themselves but simply require weapons. The Russian perspective on Ukraine strengthens Moscow and encourages Ukrainians' will to resist and retain their independence. Such a desire to defend their territory at any cost has proven to be a factor in the extent to which the Russians have achieved their aims in Ukraine, and it will remain so as long as the Russians continue to prosecute it. Governance in Russia does not indicate any different approach to the war in Ukraine from what currently exists, and as such, much change to the situation in Ukraine cannot be expected. Governance in Russia is structured around a strongman. It is a system where checks and balances are few and opposing views have been stifled. The opportunity to offer or make relevant changes to the policy and direction of the state through diverse views and different arms of government is almost absent. This has its effects on the war in Ukraine, where it is reported that coordination of combat activities among Russian forces is weak. This has contributed to their losses in the war, as Moscow recognized after its soldiers threw up their positions and Ukrainian forces murdered several of them in late 2022. As things stand, this has a significant impact on the ongoing fight. Russia has had problems producing its lost weapons, and new ones to satisfy its needs in Ukraine have not been manufactured at the required rate. As a result, Moscow has been forced to obtain some weapons from sanctioned countries. In comparison, Western countries are eager to send weaponry to Ukraine. This circumstance should have prompted Moscow to reconsider its existing approach, but its internal political arrangements have prevented this from happening.

CONCLUSION

Russia's approach in Ukraine, both in terms of war prosecution and the political goals that support it, has experienced failures since the February 2022 invasion. This is due to a variety of circumstances both inside

Ukraine and external to both countries. Overall, the Ukrainians' determination and the help they receive from NATO and other Western institutions have added to their frustration with the Russians. The reality of the necessity for a negotiated conclusion has been discussed and is supported by all parties. The problem is that the odds of compromise amongst the parties involved do not support a negotiated conclusion; therefore, the battle continues. This raises the question of who will be the first to blink. The battle could last a long time because the Russians will want to keep their current territorial gains even if they are unable to gain more. Ukraine has stated that it will fight to reclaim the territory that Russia stole in 2014 and 2022. The danger of the battle spreading to other countries exists, especially after a Russian jet struck and downed a US drone in the Black Sea in March. The current scenario does not provide much hope for a peaceful settlement, but the Russians' objectives cannot be fulfilled entirely based on Ukraine's and its backers' positions.

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