

2022-2024 RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR AND THE INTERNATIONAL SECURITY ENVIRONMENT AGAINST THE BACKGROUND OF THE THREAT OF THE USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS: SWOT ANALYSIS

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Abstract: The 21st century has transformed the global arena with its new threats, challenges and complexities. International security faces more and more new threats and challenges. All this requires a timely response and taking effective measures by states, regional and international organizations. The stability of international security is weakened by ongoing wars, armed conflicts, pandemics, international terrorism, economic conflicts, asymmetric threats, non-state aggressive actors, and the climate change process. The ongoing Russia-Ukraine war is a significant challenge for global security. Because, in case of critical damage as a result of the use of nuclear weapons or nuclear power plants, there will be a spread of radiation that has no borders. Open statements by Russian officials and nuclear threats are becoming more realistic as Russia's nuclear doctrine changes. The change of the nuclear doctrine by Russia is an important message for the West and especially for Ukraine, because the target of the nuclear weapon strike will be the territory of Ukraine, which has to carry out certain military actions on the territory of Russia for the purpose of self-defense. As a result of the new doctrine, Russia can use nuclear weapons if an adversary against it or its ally Belarus, using conventional weapons, poses a critical threat to Russian sovereignty. Based on this, it is important to better study and analyze the issue. The aim of the paper is to present the impact of the current Russia-Ukraine war on international security policy, as well as to assess how plausible it is for Russia to use nuclear weapons. The research process used the method of policy analysis, content analysis, and SWOT analysis in the format of the common Russian-Ukrainian war processes. The theory of the balance of power, the theory of securitization, the theory of geostrategic balance, the theory of nuclear power, the theory of cooperative security are used in the research process.

Keywords: Nuclear weapons, Russia-Ukraine war, International security, Geopolitics.

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Introduction. On February 24, 2024, Russia's attack on Ukraine and the beginning of a full-scale war became one of the most significant events in modern international relations. This war has had a substantial impact on numerous factors. The preconditions for this conflict began back in 2014 with the annexation of Crimea and the armed clashes in the Donbas region. It has since evolved into the largest armed conflict in Europe since World War II, profoundly affecting not only the two countries involved but also the entire global order. Political relations between the West and Russia have become extremely strained. Energy security has grown even more relevant amid Russia's increasingly aggressive actions

and policies against Ukraine. In response, the West has imposed corresponding sanctions, and European countries have gradually begun reducing their dependence on Russian energy resources. The global security environment is deteriorating, great power hostility is increasing, and non-proliferation policy is facing new challenges (Miller, 2024). Accordingly, the threat of nuclear weapons use in the context of the Russian-Ukrainian war and other potential conflicts around the world is also growing.

During the course of the war, Russia has attempted to occupy more Ukrainian territory and seize strategic assets. However, its initial goal of fully occupying Ukraine remains unachieved – thanks largely to the resilience and fighting spirit of the Ukrainian people, along with significant support from the West. This support has come in the form of military aid, ammunition, economic assistance, political backing, and humanitarian help. The war between Russia and Ukraine combines twenty-first-century technology with the tactics of World War II, the pace of World War I, and the devastating humanitarian consequences that are the hallmark of all wars. As of February 2024, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) has verified 10,582 civilian deaths in Ukraine, which coincides with a massive humanitarian crisis, as thousands of Ukrainians have been internally displaced and more than 17.3 million have fled the country (Liang, 2025). The true cause of the conflict was masked by Russian propaganda at the onset of the war, with the blame placed entirely on Ukraine's current government. As in nearly every other war initiated by Russia since World War II, the opposing side was labeled as fascist – and Ukraine was no exception. Russia seeks to fulfill its imperialist ambitions by seizing and occupying the territories of other nations, which is deeply embedded in its geopolitical code. As a result, it continues – as always – to pursue the annexation of foreign lands through hybrid warfare and military aggression. For Russia, no political agreement holds value unless it serves its own interests.

Russia is the world's largest nuclear power, with an estimated 5,580 warheads as of March 2024, including a significant non-strategic nuclear arsenal of approximately 1,558 warheads. Putin has increasingly used Russia's nuclear arsenal as a means of intimidation to pressure the West into providing military and diplomatic support to Ukraine since Russia's invasion of Ukraine in February 2022 (Milles, 2024). Russia has placed its weapons on high alert, tested and deployed new nuclear weapon delivery systems, threatened to resume nuclear testing, and suspended its participation in a major nuclear arms control treaty with the United States.

A brief overview of the Russia-Ukraine war in the format of international relations theory

The February 2022 Russian invasion of Ukraine and Ukraine's subsequent resistance to Russian aggression have triggered reams of analysis. Many analyses of the role of nuclear weapons in the conflict have emphasized novel nuclear dynamics within the war and made assessments of the implications of the war for various aspects of nuclear politics, including the global nuclear order; the utility of nuclear weapons in the conflict; the effectiveness of nuclear coercion; future patterns of proliferation; broader theories about nuclear weapons and international politics (Bell, 2024).

The nature and trajectory of the Russo-Ukrainian war can be explained by a few international relations theories. The goal of international relations theory is to arm decision-makers with knowledge to enable them to make better choices regarding the conduct of states. Consider the issue of what led to this conflict. There are others who contend that the reason for this is that Vladimir Putin, a very irrational player, initiated the war on the basis of a warped imperial vision that rejects Ukraine's status as an independent state. Others contend that as Russia is a revisionist nation unhappy with the current European security framework and responding to NATO's ongoing expansion along its borders since the end of the Cold War, we shouldn't be shocked by the invasion. The oldest and most widely accepted theoretical stances on international relations – liberalism, constructivism, and realism – are somewhat echoed in these responses. Since we live in a highly interdependent world and the current global order is ensured by international institutions created to promote cooperation between states, the liberal position contends

that starting a war of this size is so counterproductive that it can only be the product of an irrational (or extremely unreasonable) decision. As a result, its capacity to explain Russian behaviour is severely constrained. An alternative perspective on the significance of material rather than ideological aspects in international relations is provided by constructivism. In a nutshell, it is helpful because it helps us comprehend the Russian leadership's reasoning behind the „irrational“ invasion of Ukraine. It has long been believed, for instance, that Russia's growing hostility is „a renewed sense of self-confidence and recovery from the humiliations experienced after the Cold War „ (Greminger and Vsetner, 2022:8). This is only a portion of the answer, though, because this war has very strong material dimensions.

A very sound and somewhat gloomy perspective on international politics can be found if we look to realism to explain state behaviour. This method holds that a state's survival is its main objective. As a result, the default mode of international relations is the creation of zones of influence through power politics between states. Thus, the situation in Ukraine does not surprise realists. They witness an example of the well-known „security dilemma“ – a state that aims to strengthen its own defences because it perceives that its neighbours are posing a threat. (Greminger and Vsetner, 2022:9) However, it should be noted here that Russia's real policy was not so much about eliminating the threat posed by Ukraine, but rather about satisfying its imperialist interests. Because Ukraine did not threaten it in any way, and even more so, the question of Ukraine's accession to NATO was not directly on the agenda, because Ukraine, both before and after the war, has much to do in terms of forms and policies to meet the criteria for NATO membership. However, this war has given Ukraine an additional window to join NATO, if NATO decides to do so, and this will be a pragmatic approach to containing Russia's aggressive policy. However, Russia, for its part, has certain demands, including granting Ukraine neutral status and refusing to join military-political alliances. Which is not necessarily Russia's prerogative, but its ultimatum is appropriate. Which is accompanied by a policy of using nuclear weapons and intimidation. To which Ukraine responds quite adequately and is not afraid of such statements from Russia.

This succinct summary makes it abundantly evident that realism is the most appropriate theory to explain the geopolitical circumstances surrounding the conflict in Ukraine. It should be highlighted, nevertheless, that all of these theories are ultimately oversimplified to aid in our comprehension of the intricacies of global politics, establishing a conceptual framework that helps make events more comprehensible and, to some degree, predictable. It is also important that over time, some theories may seem more relevant than others. Therefore, it is important to analyze the current dynamics and expected consequences using different theories in the format of political analysis. Especially when this war is shrouded in nuclear deterrence theory and balance of power theory, hybrid war theory, etc. Several important theories without which the formation of an overall security picture is impossible.

In addition to violating the basic principles of international law, the conflict that started on February 24, 2022, has the potential to drastically and permanently alter the global order. One Tens of thousands of people have been killed, millions have been displaced, hundreds of billions of euros have been spent on infrastructure destruction, and the Russian invasion has been a heinous assault on the post-World War II global order. Nowadays, the majority of international leaders discuss a new global order. The remarkable resilience of the Ukrainian people has inspired international solidarity and strengthened ties between most NATO and EU member states. War crimes are an integral part of Russian combat, not merely a „by-product“ of conflict. Russian soldiers are wreaking havoc on innocent communities by striking civilian infrastructure in addition to military targets. Due to its immense scope, the Russian-Ukrainian conflict transcends the boundaries of post-Soviet space and has ramifications for the global order (Benedek, 2024: 560). It should also be noted that the Russia-Ukraine war, in addition to being a contest of wills and weapons, is also a testing ground for the future. The conflict in Ukraine has turned into a unique testing ground, a dreadful Silicon Valley of sorts, aggressively experimenting with the technology innovations of the last twenty years. It has been called a „technology“ battle, with the war effort being continuously strengthened by freshly created applications, state-of-the-art technologies, and unwavering human will (Liang, 2025).

Changes in Russia's nuclear doctrine

On September 25, 2024, Russian President Vladimir Putin proposed to the Security Council that Russia's nuclear doctrine be revised to allow the use of nuclear weapons even in cases where its borders are massively crossed by cruise missiles, drones, and other flying objects (Liklikadze, 2024). The Russian Security Council convenes twice a year, and in this particular case, the session was dedicated to nuclear deterrence policy. According to the proposed changes, Russia reserves the right to take extreme measures to protect its national security, including the use of nuclear weapons and nuclear forces. This raises the question: to what extent can Russia employ nuclear weapons against Ukraine under the new doctrine?

The necessity to amend Russia's nuclear doctrine has been driven by Ukraine's increasingly intensified drone attacks deep inside Russian territory. These attacks target military installations, strategic sites, and include significant strikes on weapons depots, command centers, and areas of concentrated military assets. As a result, future attacks are anticipated on airbases housing Russia's strategic bombers and other critical infrastructure. It is known that the United States and the United Kingdom plan to supply Ukraine with long-range precision-guided missiles, enabling Ukraine to strike deeper into Russian territory in pursuit of military superiority. Specifically, these include the American ATACMS missiles with a range of up to 300 kilometers, and the Anglo-French Storm Shadow missiles with a range of up to 560 kilometers. According to Ukrainian authorities, the use of such weapons within Russian territory is expected to accelerate Ukraine's path to victory (Liklikadze, 2024).

It is important to examine the nuclear doctrine adopted by Russia in 2020, which provides for a retaliatory nuclear strike in cases where an adversary uses weapons of mass destruction against Russian territory or that of its allies. The doctrine also permits the use of nuclear weapons if an enemy attack targets state or military facilities whose destruction could undermine Russia's ability to launch a nuclear response, or if the existence of the Russian state faces an existential threat. According to President Putin, given the military threats and challenges currently posed against Russia and its allies, it is essential to revise the existing doctrine to allow broader conditions for the potential use of nuclear forces.

In the revised edition of Russia's nuclear doctrine, President Vladimir Putin stated that nuclear weapons may be used not only in response to a nuclear attack on Russia, but also in the event of a massive conventional assault. Furthermore, „any aggression against Russia by a non-nuclear state, if carried out with the involvement or support of a nuclear-armed state, will be considered a 'joint attack against the Russian Federation'“ (Liklikadze, 2024).

A new nuclear weapons doctrine proposed in September was formally adopted by Russia on November 19. According to the new doctrine, if a non-nuclear-armed state supported by a nuclear-armed state attacks Russia's territory, Russia may respond with nuclear weapons. It is crucial to take the nuclear threat and the increasing intent behind it seriously, even though analysts disagree about how new the doctrine is in comparison to previous declarations of a similar nature. ICAN condemned the new doctrine when it was announced in September, saying: „Today's updates to Russia's nuclear doctrine outlining when Russia would use nuclear weapons are dangerously ambiguous. They blur the line between conventional and nuclear attack and undermine predictability, increasing the risk of nuclear war“ (New Russian doctrine increases possible nuclear weapons use scenarios, 2024).

The updated doctrine outlines the core conditions under which Russia would be entitled to employ nuclear weapons from its arsenal. As President Putin noted, „We will consider such an option immediately upon receiving reliable information about the mass launch of air and space-based strike assets and their crossing of our national borders“ (Liklikadze, 2024). According to Putin, these strike assets include aircraft within strategic and tactical aviation, cruise missiles, drones, hypersonic weapons, and other types of airborne systems. He further emphasized, „We reserve the right to use nuclear weapons in the event of aggression not only against Russia, but also against Belarus, as a member of the Union State. All these matters have been coordinated with the Belarusian side, including with President Lukashenko – particularly in cases where conventional weapons used by an adversary pose a critical

threat to our sovereignty“ (Liklikadze, 2024). Beyond Putin himself, the potential use of nuclear weapons has become a recurring theme in public statements by key figures in Russia's political and security establishment. For instance, former President and current Deputy Chairman of the Russian Security Council has repeatedly threatened Ukraine with nuclear annihilation. Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov has echoed similar rhetoric. Russian state-controlled media and propaganda outlets consistently amplify these narratives, frequently issuing nuclear threats and even calling outright for the use of nuclear weapons. This kind of discourse significantly increases the perceived risk of a limited nuclear strike, particularly through the deployment of low-yield tactical nuclear weapons under specific battlefield circumstances. The question of whether Russia could resort to the use of tactical nuclear weapons on the battlefield in Ukraine has also invariably arisen over the last three years of the conflict. Members of the G7, including nuclear powers France, the US and UK, have called Russia's nuclear posturing „irresponsible“ and „unacceptable“. In June 2023, former NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg condemned Russia's „reckless nuclear rhetoric“, a view that has since been shared by the new Secretary General Mark Rutte (Mills, 2024:2). It is also worth noting that President Putin has explicitly warned Western countries against transferring medium-range missile systems to Ukraine. According to him, if such transfers occur, Russia will interpret this as a clear signal that NATO and EU member states are directly participating in the conflict. In that case, he said, Russia will be forced – out of necessity arising from the emerging threats – to take appropriate action. He warned that such a development would have dire and irreversible consequences for Ukraine and its population.

The Russia-Ukraine War and the Policy of Nuclear Deterrence

Ukraine's difficult situation is due to its flawed nuclear history, which led Ukraine to decide in 1994 to give up the huge nuclear arsenal it inherited from the collapse of the Soviet Union. Despite some pressure, it had a choice to either give up its nuclear weapons or keep them. Despite some difficulties, Ukraine's leaders had to make the appropriate decision and give up its nuclear arsenal. Ultimately, Ukraine decided to give up its nuclear legacy and join the non-nuclear states as a non-nuclear state, especially because it wanted to receive some support and assistance from the international community. Otherwise, it could be subject to sanctions. What motives dictated this does not really matter, because if they wanted to do so, they would have implemented the corresponding policy. However, it should be noted that in exchange for disarmament, Ukraine was promised security guarantees, protection from the use of force, nuclear or otherwise, against Ukraine, according to the agreement. This was envisaged in the so-called Budapest Memorandum between the three nuclear powers: the United States, Great Britain and the Russian Federation. This document has become an integral part of the international non-proliferation regime. In 2014, one of the signatory states, Russia, grossly violated it, and in 2022 – with new aggression and cruelty, accompanied by nuclear threats. As a result, the credibility of the non-proliferation regime and the value of security guarantees as an instrument of non-proliferation policy are undermined.

After Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the prospects for arms control and arms reduction between the United States and Russia have become even more ambiguous. The United States and Russia hardly talk to each other. This creates a significant problem for nuclear security. The latest treaty to reduce strategic offensive weapons, New START, expires in February 2026, and without the prospect of a follow-on agreement, the world could find itself without a single arms control treaty that would limit the world's largest nuclear arsenals for the first time in five decades. The lack of progress on arms control will surely further deteriorate the global nuclear order.

The conflict in Ukraine represents a setback to the arms control and nuclear nonproliferation components of the System of Nuclear Abstinence. The crucible of Ukraine is a case study of what happens to a nation that is not shielded by a nuclear deterrent, whether it be its own or one provided by an ally, even if restraint between Russia and NATO may be a good illustration of how nuclear deterrence op-

erates (Budjeryn, 2024). The conflict in Ukraine presents the System of Nuclear Energy Governance with an unprecedented challenge. The capture and takeover of the Chornobyl nuclear power plant and its exclusion zone in February and March 2022, as well as the ongoing occupation of Europe's largest nuclear power plant, Zaporizhzhia, and its satellite city of Enerhodar, are only two of the numerous nuclear dangers that Russia has manufactured and managed. The events in Ukraine differ from the previous attacks in several ways. First, a sizable, functioning nuclear power station with a sizable stockpile of irradiated nuclear material in reactor cores and on-site storage, like the Zaporizhzhia NPP, has never before been the target of a military attack. This is a significant distinction from the earlier attacks. The total level of radiation present at the Zaporizhzhia and Chornobyl nuclear power stations is far higher than that of any previously targeted nuclear facility because they house facilities like functioning nuclear power plants and spent (irradiated) nuclear fuel storage (Fedchenko, 2023:4)

Russia, with its aggressive war, is trying to expand its borders and influence. It is fighting not only for territory, but also to seize the precious and rare minerals in Ukraine, because it is precisely that state that will be the center of influence in the near future, which will have large reserves and resources of these minerals. Modern industry in the military direction urgently needs precious and rare minerals – for launching drones, missile systems, satellites, computer technologies, etc. China has already gained significant control over the reserves of precious and rare minerals on various continents around the world. Accordingly, Russia's aggressive policy is also significantly related to this issue, along with uranium deposits located on the territory of Ukraine.

The threat of the use of tactical nuclear weapons by Russia is growing, against the background of the fact that it has not had significant successes on the front line. If Russia is further pressured on the front lines and forced to withdraw from occupied territories, it is likely to be prepared to use tactical nuclear weapons against the Ukrainian army and population.

SWOT analysis of the Russia-Ukraine war

SWOT Analysis of the Russia-Ukraine War This SWOT analysis aims to identify the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats revealed by the ongoing Russia-Ukraine war. The analysis evaluates the situation as of 2024, when the conflict continues to evolve, including increasing concerns around nuclear security.

1. Ukraine's Strengths

1. International Support and Solidarity:

Ukraine has gained unprecedented diplomatic, financial, and military support from the West and numerous countries around the world. NATO member states, particularly the United States, the United Kingdom, and European Union countries, provide Ukraine with modern weaponry, intelligence, and economic assistance. This support has proven crucial in preserving Ukraine's ability to resist.

2. National Unity and High Combat Spirit:

In response to Russia's invasion, the Ukrainian people have demonstrated astonishing national unity and a desire to resist. President Zelensky's leadership and the resilience of the Ukrainian people have strengthened civil society and the armed forces. The patriotism of Ukrainians and their readiness to defend their land is a significant psychological advantage

3. Military Experience and Adaptability:

Since the 2014 conflict in Donbas, Ukrainian forces have gained significant combat experience. During the war, they have shown remarkable adaptability in mastering Western weapons systems and developing innovative tactics, especially in drone warfare. Their flexibility surpasses the rigid command structure of the Russian military.

4. Strategic Geographic Location:

The knowledge of Ukraine's territory and landscape gives a significant advantage to local forces. Moreover, its geographic location in the heart of Europe means that logistical routes for Western aid are relatively short, especially in Western Ukraine.

I. Russia's Strengths

1. Resource Advantage:

Russia has a significant quantitative advantage in terms of military personnel, equipment, and financial resources. Despite suffering considerable losses, Russia's military-industrial complex has the capability to mass-produce weaponry, particularly artillery shells and drones.

2. Energy Leverage:

Russia remains a major supplier of energy resources, especially natural gas, to many European countries. Despite Europe's efforts to reduce its dependence on Russian energy, this leverage still provides Moscow with certain influence on the international stage.

3. Nuclear Deterrence Factor:

Russia is a nuclear state, which limits the scale of direct Western involvement in the conflict. The Kremlin periodically uses nuclear escalation rhetoric as a tool of psychological pressure.

4. Information Warfare Capabilities:

Russia has developed a powerful propaganda apparatus, which actively works to maintain the support of its own population as well as to influence international audiences. Russian disinformation campaigns aim to weaken support for Ukraine in the West and to create alternative narratives about the conflict.

II. Ukraine's Weaknesses

1. Resource Limitations and Dependence on the West:

Ukraine is significantly dependent on international aid in terms of both military equipment and financial resources. This dependence creates vulnerability, especially if Western support decreases due to political changes or „aid fatigue.“

2. Demographic Challenges and Migration:

As a result of the war, millions of Ukrainians have been forced to leave their homes, both internally and abroad. This mass displacement leads to labor shortages, demographic problems, and socio-economic challenges.

3. Critical Infrastructure Damage:

Russia's systematic bombing of Ukraine's energy and transportation infrastructure causes serious problems for both military operations and the civilian population. Interruptions in energy supply are particularly problematic during the winter.

4. Corruption and Institutional Weaknesses:

Despite significant progress, corruption and institutional weaknesses have historically been a problem in Ukraine. Even during wartime, these issues can affect the efficient distribution of resources and the effectiveness of military operations.

5. Vulnerability of Airspace – Lack of Air Superiority :

Since the beginning of the war, Russia has had air superiority and dominance, which weakens the capabilities of Ukraine's armed forces. The shortage of anti-aircraft systems and specifically the ab-

sence of interceptors for ballistic missiles is a significant challenge for Ukraine. When there is talk of the threat of nuclear weapons use, the presence of anti-missile systems is vitally important. Threats are also posed by Russian military aircraft and unmanned aerial vehicles – kamikaze drones.

II. Russia's Weaknesses

1. International Isolation and Sanctions:

Russia has been subjected to unprecedented economic sanctions and diplomatic isolation. These sanctions limit the development of its economy, especially in high-tech sectors, and complicate the functioning of the military-industrial complex.

2. Military Losses and Personnel Issues:

Russia has suffered significant losses in both military personnel and equipment. There are also problems in terms of morale, psychological readiness, and motivation. Mobilization has caused social tension and increased emigration.

3. Logistical and Command Failures:

During the war, Russia's military forces have revealed serious problems in logistics, communication, and coordination. Corruption and ineffective management hinder the full realization of military potential.

4. Economic Struggles:

Despite the Russian economy showing unexpected resilience to sanctions, it faces serious long-term challenges. The militarization of the economy, isolation from global technological development, and dependence on energy exports create structural problems.

5. Airspace Vulnerabilities:

Despite having some air superiority, Russia also faces significant challenges in terms of airspace vulnerability, as Ukraine attacks it with various types of missiles produced by the U.S., Germany, France, and other European states. A significant challenge for Russia is also posed by unmanned aerial vehicles and drones.

III. Ukraine's Opportunities

1. Euro-Atlantic Integration:

Ukraine has received EU candidate status and dialogue on NATO membership prospects has intensified. The process of rapprochement with the EU and NATO may accelerate due to the conflict, which would provide important long-term security and economic development guarantees.

2. Economic Reconstruction and Modernization:

After the war ends, Ukraine will have the opportunity to carry out large-scale reconstruction with international support. This process could become a catalyst for the modernization of the country's economy and the creation of a new, more sustainable and innovative economic model.

3. Defense Industry Development:

During the war, Ukraine developed significant capabilities in military technologies, particularly in drones and cybersecurity. Capitalizing on this experience may result in the formation of a strong military-industrial sector, which will contribute to both national security and economic growth.

4. Strengthening National Identity:

The war became a catalyst for strengthening Ukrainian national identity and freeing itself from Russian cultural influence. This process helps in the formation of a unified, democratic, and European Ukraine.

5. Potential Nuclear Armament:

During the course of the war, Ukraine has repeatedly emphasized that without security guarantees, it may be forced to work on the development of nuclear weapons, for which it has the experience and technology. This increases the probability that Ukraine may start working on nuclear arms. If Ukraine manages this with Western support and involvement, it would gain significant security guarantees.

III. Russia's Opportunities

1. Geopolitical Reorientation:

Russia is deepening relations with states such as China, India, North Korea, Iran, and other countries that do not join Western sanctions. These alliances, both now and in the future, may become a means of bypassing sanctions and developing new economic opportunities

2. Import Substitution and Economic Independence:

Sanctions may stimulate Russia's economic diversification and the development of domestic production. In certain sectors, such as agriculture, Russia has already achieved significant progress in import substitution.

3. New Trade and Energy Routes:

In the background of deteriorating relations with Europe, Russia is actively developing energy and trade cooperation with Asian countries. Infrastructure development in this direction may become important in the long-term perspective.

4. Military Experience and Technology Testing:

Despite the difficulties, the war allows Russia to test military equipment and tactics in real combat conditions. This experience may be used for military reforms and the development of new technologies.

5. Shifting the War's Geographic Focus:

Russia can provoke conflicts in various regions, particularly in the Middle East, where U.S. and Western interests lie. This means that Ukraine may partially lose access to arms, funding, and intelligence or other types of support – giving Russia a relative advantage in military operations.

IV. Threats Facing Ukraine

1. Prolonged War and Donor Fatigue:

Prolonging the war will result in human, economic and social losses. There is a risk that international attention and support for Ukraine will diminish over time, especially if other global crises arise.

2. Territorial Loss or Frozen Conflict:

One of the dangers is the end of the conflict according to a scenario that implies the loss of territories or a „frozen conflict“, which will hinder the peaceful development of the country and international integration.

3. Demographic Crisis and Brain Drain:

Prolonged war and instability lead to emigration of population, especially young people and skilled professionals. Such „brain drain“ can become a serious challenge for post-war reconstruction and development.

4. Social and Political Destabilization:

Economic hardship, war-related trauma, and social tensions pose risks of political instability. Disagreements over priorities and resource allocation may arise during the reconstruction process.

5. New Regional Conflicts:

A significant threat to Ukraine is the emergence of a new regional conflict involving a US-EU partner state. This would lead to a reduction in some of the aid to Ukraine, which would weaken its military potential given its already meager military resources.

6. Tactical Nuclear Weapon Use by Russia:

The threat of using tactical nuclear weapons is growing as a result of the rhetoric of the Russian political leadership. Added to this is the fact that these weapons are also located on the territory of Belarus, which increases the risks of using these weapons. Also, if the Russian armed forces are pursued and forced to leave the occupied territories, the likelihood of using tactical nuclear weapons increases, since Russia will not emerge from this war defeated, which will undermine its international role and prestige.

IV. Threats Facing Russia

1. Long-Term Economic and Technological Backwardness:

Sanctions and international isolation eventually lead to technological backwardness of the global economy. The development of high-tech sectors is especially problematic in conditions of limited access to Western technologies.

2. Domestic Instability and Social Unrest:

Prolonged war, economic problems, and mounting human losses could lead to internal discontent and political instability. Strengthening authoritarian control is effective in the short term, but in the long term it could increase tensions.

3. Erosion of Geopolitical Influence:

Russia's war in Ukraine has led to the strengthening and consolidation of NATO. The entry of Finland and Sweden into the alliance changes the strategic balance on Russia's borders. Russia's influence in the post-Soviet space has also declined, especially in the South Caucasus and Central Asia.

4. Growing Dependence on China:

As relations with the West deteriorate, Russia becomes increasingly dependent on China for economic and political support. This asymmetrical relationship could eventually become problematic for Russian sovereignty.

5. Damage to strategic facilities:

With Ukraine's attacks intensifying and the West expecting permission to use long-range missiles, Russia poses a direct threat to the defense of strategic assets. This is exacerbated by Ukraine's use of unmanned aerial vehicles, the range of which Ukraine is slowly increasing. At the same time, Ukraine's production of its own long-range missile systems poses a significant challenge to Russia.

6. Use of Tactical Nuclear Weapons by Russia:

If Russia used tactical nuclear weapons in hostilities against Ukraine, then this would be followed by increased international sanctions, the pursuit of a policy of isolationism, and a more aggressive policy from the West. More offensive weapons would be transferred to Ukraine. Also, long-range missile systems would be supplied and given permission to use them. This would automatically lead to a decrease in oil prices as a result of Western pressure, which would directly hit the Russian economy and military industry.

In short, the Russian-Ukrainian war is a complex conflict with many variables that affect both the parties directly involved and the entire international system. A SWOT analysis shows that both sides have significant strengths and serious challenges. Accordingly, the dynamics of the conflict determine what additional impact it will have on regional and global security. The use of new technologies in war-

fare has made it even more difficult to predict the course of hostilities, since in this case the strategic initiative often changes.

Ukraine's main strength lies in its unprecedented international support and national unity, while Russia relies on its material resources and energy leverage, as well as mobilizing the support of its strategic partners. At the same time, both sides face significant risks associated with the prolongation of the conflict, economic problems, and social destabilization.

Conclusion

As a result of the Russia-Ukraine war, several security dimensions emerged in the geopolitical and geoeconomic direction. We can single out several factors from them: the issue of nuclear security, the issue of food security, the issue of cybersecurity, which has grown even more in the hybrid and information security format, in the direction of the struggle for centers of geopolitical influence, the issue of Ukraine's precious and rare minerals as a vector of the struggle for resources. The war waged for geopolitical dominance did not go as planned by the Kremlin leadership. Accordingly, they had to suffer more losses in financial, military and human terms, which turned out to be a rather big blow for them from a political point of view, because they did not expect the war to last more than four years. This war exhausted Russia, although not completely, which forced it to refuse to wage war. Along with Russia, it should also be noted that as a result of the war, Ukraine and its army were also exhausted, although not completely, thanks to the support of the Ukrainian people and the West. Attention should also be paid to the factor that analysts, military experts, specialists in the field, and a number of people ask why the West does not provide Ukraine with long-range missile systems and more powerful missile weapons. This is precisely what the issue of nuclear security indicates, because the Russian president and his political establishment often emphasize that Russia is ready to use nuclear weapons against Ukraine if necessary. They also noted that if Russian cities and strategic objects are bombed with Western and American weapons, which will carry a powerful explosive charge and fly at a long range, they will have to take quite tough measures using nuclear weapons.

It was precisely in connection with the above-mentioned issue that Russia deployed tactical nuclear weapons in Belarus, which was a direct political step. At the same time, with this step, Russia gave Belarus certain security guarantees, which its leader had been demanding since the beginning of the war, because he emphasized the threats emanating from NATO against Belarus, that it was defenseless in the event of a military escalation. The threat of the use of tactical nuclear weapons by Russia still exists, because as a result of its explosion, a small territory of Ukraine would be destroyed, these could be important military facilities, small settlements, strategic facilities, etc. Which, on the one hand, would not lead to the release of a large amount of radiation, which would cause significant harm to the population of NATO states or the European Union. Since hostilities are underway in the eastern part of Ukraine and Russia will not use it as a rule in western Ukraine, it is unlikely that Russia will use it to bomb Kiev. Because the reaction of the West and the US to this will be quite harsh, which will mean a very difficult end for Russia, because it will also lose the support it has from certain states. Which if a number of pro-Russian states do not do willingly, the West and the US will force them through diplomatic means, by imposing sanctions or by expelling them from international organizations, etc. This will be the most serious war crime, despite everything that Russia is doing against Ukraine. Russia acts openly and does not shy away from committing war crimes, of which Bucha and other cities and settlements are a clear example. It is for this reason that its leaders openly declare that they are ready to use nuclear weapons, which poses a rather difficult challenge to the regional and global security dimension. Accordingly, pressure on Russia should be increased not only from the West and the USA, but also from the remaining geopolitical centers of influence in the world so that Russia does not use its nuclear tactical weapons, the use of which is more likely than other much more powerful weapons in its nuclear arsenal. The civilized world should not allow Russia to use nuclear weapons using all political and international mechanisms.

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