



WE HAVE NO OTHER OPTION THAN TO WIN

EDITED BY
JAKUB PIEŃKOWSKI, TOMASZ ZAJĄC



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POLSKI INSTYTUT SPRAW MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH
THE POLISH INSTITUTE OF INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS

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WE HAVE NO OTHER OPTION THAN TO WIN

SELECTED SPEECHES OF WORLD LEADERS
ON THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE

EDITED BY
JAKUB PIEŃKOWSKI, TOMASZ ZAJĄC

WARSAW 2025

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Sławomir Dębski

Introduction

The Russian aggression against Ukraine, which resumed on February 24, 2022, from the very beginning had a character that went beyond military confrontation, involving hundreds of thousands of troops. From the very beginning, since 2014 and the annexation of Crimea, Russia's war against Ukraine has also taken the form of verbal aggression. Imperial Russia, behind the veil of words about peace, has always tried to hide its true intentions from the outside world. Russia's rulers justified their territorial acquisitions, either by alleged historical rights to Rus lands or by defending the Orthodox faith. Bolsheviks in turn, on the one hand portraying world wars as the highest stage of capitalism and blaming the rotten capitalists for provoking them, but on the other seeking to bring the moment of the outbreak of world revolution closer, tried to conceal their hopes for a world war and present themselves as defenders of peace. For this reason, their peaceful rhetoric had to conceal their true intentions to set the world on fire and offer false justifications for Soviet territorial annexations. In such situations, the Soviet Union invoked either the collapse of a neighbouring state, as was the case with Poland in 1939, or violations of previously imposed treaty forces, as was the case with the Baltic states in 1940, or justifying the use of force by the need to increase its own security, as was the case with Finland in 1939. Added to this was the justification of armed aggressions by the need to provide "brotherly aid"—against Hungary in 1956, Czechoslovakia in 1968, and Afghanistan in 1979.

Putin's Russian elites come from this very culture of words, in which the truth is whatever can be promulgated by armed force and imposed on its own people to believe with the apparatus of propaganda violence, imprisoning those who think and judge Russia's actions differently. In justifying his aggression against Ukraine, Putin resorted to the same instrumentality as all previous Kremlin rulers, from the tsars to the Bolsheviks. In his speeches, articles, and interviews, he spoke of the collapse of Ukrainian statehood, defined Crimea as the cradle of Russian civilization, raised the argument of NATO's approach to Russia's borders, which he claimed would justify territorial annexation at the expense of Ukraine dictated by security considerations. Finally, he claimed that the democratic Ukrainian government was the reincarnation of Nazism and called for a "holy" war against them.

Putin lied and falsified reality, hoping that the elites and societies of the democratic world, raised in the culture of postmodernism, sceptical of facts and truth and accustomed to constantly questioning it, would accept the reverence of the Russian interpretation

of events, which would weaken their determination to come to the aid of Ukraine, the victim of Russian unprovoked aggression.

However, the response from the democratic world has been surprisingly consistent, as evidenced by a selection of speeches prepared by the Polish Institute of International Affairs. Russia's war on Ukraine and the free world community supporting it is also a war of words. Speeches, while sometimes ephemeral, are a powerful tool for strategic communication, and their role in international politics becomes particularly evident in the face of crises such as Russia's armed and verbal assault on Ukraine.

It is through words that heads of state, heads of government, foreign ministers of states, and international organisations mobilise allies, explain to their populations the need to help Ukraine, and justify the sacrifices involved. They also expose the hypocrisy and criminal face of Russia, which, through the manipulation of language, tries to falsify reality, calling its aggression a "special military operation" and attempting to cover up the violation of the most basic principles of international law.

Thus, speeches play a dual role—on the one hand, they are an informational tool, and, on the other, they are a political act, as they contain a decision on the policy that will be pursued from now on. The words of leaders have defined the policy of states in defence of the order based on international law and mobilised the international community to defend the threatened values. The defence of the principles of the international order does not depend on legal or institutional mechanisms alone, but also—and perhaps most importantly—on the willingness of Member States to stand up for these values. As Winston Churchill noted in his speech in Zurich on 19 September 1946: "The League of Nations did not fail because of its principles or conceptions. It failed because those principles were deserted by those states which brought it into being". Having learned from this warning, the leaders of the Free World, whose speeches we have decided to bring to our readers, decided to stand up for the UN Charter, the prohibition of armed aggression, and the right to self-defence in the name of sovereignty and territorial integrity. This fact is worth appreciating and keeping in mind.

The leaders' speeches play several key roles. First, they are a formal expression of a country's position in a given conflict. When a country's leader takes the floor in an international crisis such as Russia's aggression in Ukraine, that leader thereby defines the country's foreign policy towards the conflict. Speeches also have a mobilising function for both the public and international partners. The leaders of such countries appeal for military, financial, and humanitarian support for Ukraine, emphasizing the moral and political duty to help a country that has been the victim of brutal aggression. In this context, the leaders' speeches become a tool for building an international coalition against Russia.

The speeches also play a key role in condemning violations of international law. In the context of Russian aggression against Ukraine, explicit accusations of violations of the UN Charter, norms of international law, and fundamental principles of state sovereignty were repeatedly made. An example is the repeated invocation by the authors of the speeches included in this volume concerning the principle of territorial integrity, which was brutally violated by Russia. In this case, the speeches serve the function of not only condemning but also reminding the international community of the need to defend these principles.

It is worth emphasising that the defence of the international legal order depends largely on the willingness of United Nations member states to defend its values and principles. The Russian aggression against Ukraine poses a challenge to the entire international security and legal system. Speeches by leaders of Western countries, including the United States, Britain, Germany, and Poland, have repeatedly stressed the need to defend the international order based on the rule of law. It is these speeches that have become a voice in defence of Ukraine, and at the same time a voice in defence of the principles that have governed international relations for decades.

The defence of the principles of international law in the case of war in Ukraine is not only a moral obligation of the international community but also a strategic interest of democratic states. Mutual respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of states is the foundation of international stability. Any violation of these principles, especially by a nuclear power such as Russia, which is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and therefore has special responsibilities on that account, can lead to destabilisation and even the destruction of the global security system.

The speeches stressed the importance of defending international law, the need for military and financial support for Ukraine, and solidarity with the victims of the war. These speeches, often delivered in the early stages of the conflict, were aimed at mobilising domestic political and social resources, as well as building an international coalition against Russia.

We provide the speeches as they were posted on the official websites of states and international bodies. In cases where a particular text has not been published in English by them, we have translated it and indicated this at the beginning of the text. Except for abbreviations—which we clearly mark—we have not interfered with the content of the speeches.

Finally, it is necessary to spend a few words explaining why we decided to include Vladimir Putin's speeches in this collection. The leaders of the democratic, Free World in their speeches engaged in an open polemic with the theses propounded by the aggressor—Putin's Russia. Without this context, it would be difficult to understand

these exchanges, so to make it easier for readers to follow this duel, we decided to add the statements of the offender—the Russian leader. The analysis of his speeches is a valuable source of information about what the regime in power in Russia looks like, its propaganda and how the imperial narrative to which Russian society succumbs is shaped.

However, in order not to put Ukraine and the states that support it on an equal footing with Russia, which carries out aggression and commits war crimes, we have symbolically separated these speeches and moved them to the appendix of this publication. In this way, we wanted to emphasise—already at the level of the table of contents—that we treat this material only as an object for analysis. For there is no doubt that Russia is fully responsible for the events taking place in Ukraine. Putin is a war criminal and authoritarian leader who, unlike the other authors of the speeches in this collection, has no democratic legitimacy. He should therefore not appear with them as an equal world leader, but rather in a specially designated place, reminiscent in our mind of the bench of the International Criminal Court in Hague. That's where people like Putin belong—in the appendix of History, not on its front pages.

UKRAINE

Volodymyr Zelenskyy, PresidentSpeech at the 58th Munich Security Conference

19.02.2022

Ukraine wants peace. Europe wants peace. The world says it doesn't want to fight, and Russia says it doesn't want to attack. Someone is lying. This is not an axiom, but it is no longer a hypothesis.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Two days ago I was in Donbas, on the delimitation line. Legally - between Ukraine and the temporarily occupied territories. In fact, the delimitation line between peace and war. Where on the one side there is a kindergarten, and on the other side there is a projectile that hit it. On the one side there is a school, on the other side there is a projectile hitting the school yard.

And next to it there are 30 children who go... no, not to NATO, but to school. Someone has physics classes. Knowing its basic laws, even children understand how absurd the statements that the shelling is carried out by Ukraine sound. Someone has math classes. Children can calculate the difference between the number of shelling occasions in these three days and the occasions of mentioning Ukraine in this year's Munich Security Report without a calculator. And someone has history classes. And when a bomb crater appears in the school yard, children have a question: has the world forgotten its mistakes of the XX century? What do attempts at appeasement lead to? As the question "Why die for Danzig?" turned into the need to die for Dunkirk and dozens of other cities in Europe and the world. At the cost of tens of millions of lives.

These are terrible lessons of history. I just want to make sure you and I read the same books. Hence, we have the same understanding of the answer to the main question: how did it happen that in the XXI century, Europe is at war again and people are dying? Why does it last longer than World War II? How did we get to the biggest security crisis since the Cold War? For me, as the President of a country that has lost part of the territory, thousands of people and on whose borders there are now 150,000 Russian troops, equipment and heavy weapons, the answer is obvious.

The architecture of world security is fragile and needs to be updated. The rules that the world agreed on decades ago no longer work. They do not keep up with new threats. They are not effective for overcoming them. This is a cough syrup when you need a coronavirus vaccine. The security system is slow. It crashes again. Because of different things: selfishness, self-confidence, irresponsibility of states at the global level. As a result, we have crimes of some and indifference of others. Indifference that makes you an accomplice. It is symbolic that I am talking about this right here. It was here 15

years ago that Russia announced its intention to challenge global security. What did the world say? Appeasement. Result? At least - the annexation of Crimea and aggression against my state.

The UN, which is supposed to defend peace and world security, cannot defend itself. When its Charter is violated. When one of the members of the UN Security Council annexes the territory of one of the founding members of the UN. And the UN itself ignores the Crimea Platform, the goal of which is to de-occupy Crimea peacefully and protect the rights of Crimeans.

Three years ago, it was here that Angela Merkel said: “Who will pick up the wreckage of the world order? Only all of us, together.” The audience gave a standing ovation. But, unfortunately, the collective applause did not grow into collective action. And now, when the world is talking about the threat of a great war, the question arises: is there anything left to pick up? The security architecture in Europe and the world is almost destroyed. It's too late to think about repairs, it's time to build a new system. Mankind has done this twice, paying too high a price - two world wars. We have a chance to break this trend until it becomes a consistent pattern. And start building a new system before millions of victims. Having the old lessons of the First and Second World Wars, not our own experience of the possible third, God forbid.

I talked about it here. And on the rostrum of the UN. That in the XXI century there are no more foreign wars. That the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbas affects the whole world. And this is not a war in Ukraine, but a war in Europe. I said this at summits and forums. In 2019, 2020, 2021. Will the world be able to hear me in 2022? This is no longer a hypothesis, but not an axiom yet. Why? Evidence is needed. More important than words on Twitter or statements in the media. Action is required. It is the world that needs it, not just us.

We will defend our land with or without the support of partners. Whether they give us hundreds of modern weapons or five thousand helmets. We appreciate any help, but everyone should understand that these are not charitable contributions that Ukraine should ask for or remind of. These are not noble gestures for which Ukraine should bow low. This is your contribution to the security of Europe and the world. Where Ukraine has been a reliable shield for eight years. And for eight years it has been rebuffing one of the world's biggest armies. Which stands along our borders, not the borders of the EU. And Grad rockets hit Mariupol, not European cities. And after almost six months of fighting, the airport in Donetsk was destroyed, not in Frankfurt. And it's always hot in the Avdiivka industrial zone - it was hot there in the last days, not in Montmartre. And no European country knows what military burials every day in all regions are. And no European leader knows what regular meetings with the families of the deceased are.

Be that as it may, we will defend our beautiful land no matter if we have 50,000, 150 or one million soldiers of any army on the border. To really help Ukraine, it is not necessary to say how many servicemen and military equipment are on the border. Say what numbers we have. To really help Ukraine, it is not necessary to constantly talk only about the dates of the probable invasion. We will defend our land on February 16, March 1 and December 31. We need other dates much more. And everyone understands perfectly well which ones.

Tomorrow in Ukraine is the Day of the Heroes of the Heavenly Hundred. Eight years ago, Ukrainians made their choice, and many gave their lives for that choice. Eight years later, should Ukraine constantly call for recognition of the European perspective? Since 2014, Russia has been convincing that we have chosen the wrong path, that no one is waiting for us in Europe. Shouldn't Europe constantly say and prove by action that this is not true? Shouldn't the EU say today that its citizens are positive about Ukraine's accession to the Union? Why do we avoid this question? Doesn't Ukraine deserve direct and honest answers?

This also applies to NATO. We are told: the door is open. But so far authorized access only. If not all members of the Alliance want to see us or all members of the Alliance do not want to see us, be honest. Open doors are good, but we need open answers, not open questions for years. Isn't the right to the truth one of our enhanced opportunities? The best time for it is the next summit in Madrid.

Russia says Ukraine seeks to join the Alliance to return Crimea by force. It is gratifying that the words "return Crimea" appear in their rhetoric. But they inattentively read Article 5 of the NATO Charter: collective action is for protection, not offensive. Crimea and the occupied regions of Donbas will certainly return to Ukraine, but only peacefully.

Ukraine consistently implements the Normandy agreements and the Minsk agreements. Their foundation is the unquestionable recognition of the territorial integrity and independence of our state. We seek a diplomatic settlement of the armed conflict. Note: solely on the basis of international law.

So what is really going on in the peace process? Two years ago, we agreed with the Presidents of France, the Russian Federation, the Chancellor of Germany on a full-scale ceasefire. And Ukraine is scrupulously adhering to these agreements. We are as restrained as possible against the background of constant provocations. We are constantly making proposals in the framework of the Normandy Four and the Trilateral Contact Group. And what do we see? Shells and bullets from the other side. Our soldiers and civilians are being killed and wounded, and civilian infrastructure is being destroyed.

The last days have become especially illustrative. Hundreds of massive shelling occasions with weapons prohibited by the Minsk agreements. It is also important to

stop restricting the admission of OSCE observers to Ukraine's TOT. They are threatened. They are intimidated. All humanitarian issues are blocked. Two years ago, I signed a law on the unconditional admission of representatives of humanitarian organizations to detainees. But they are simply not admitted to the temporarily occupied territories. After two exchanges of captives, the process was blocked, although Ukraine provided agreed lists. Inhuman torture at the infamous Isolation Prison in Donetsk has become a symbol of human rights abuses. The two new checkpoints we opened in November 2020 in the Luhansk region still do not function - and here we see outright obstruction under contrived pretexts.

Ukraine is doing everything possible to reach progress in discussions and political issues. In the TCG, in the Minsk process, we've put forward proposals - draft laws, but everything is blocked - no one talks about them. Ukraine demands to unblock the negotiation process immediately. But this does not mean that the search for peace is limited to it alone. We are ready to look for the key to the end of the war in all possible formats and platforms: Paris, Berlin, Minsk. Istanbul, Geneva, Brussels, New York, Beijing - I don't care where in the world to negotiate peace in Ukraine.

It does not matter if four countries, seven or a hundred participate, the main thing is that Ukraine and Russia are among them. What is really important is the understanding that peace is needed not only by us, the world needs peace in Ukraine. Peace and restoration of territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders. This is the only way. And I hope no one thinks of Ukraine as a convenient and eternal buffer zone between the West and Russia. This will never happen. Nobody will allow that.

Otherwise - who's next? Will NATO countries have to defend each other? I want to believe that the North Atlantic Treaty and Article 5 will be more effective than the Budapest Memorandum. Ukraine has received security guarantees for abandoning the world's third nuclear capability. We don't have that weapon. We also have no security. We also do not have part of the territory of our state that is larger in area than Switzerland, the Netherlands or Belgium. And most importantly - we don't have millions of our citizens. We don't have all this.

Therefore, we have something. The right to demand a shift from a policy of appeasement to ensuring security and peace guarantees. Since 2014, Ukraine has tried three times to convene consultations with the guarantor states of the Budapest Memorandum. Three times without success. Today Ukraine will do it for the fourth time. I, as President, will do this for the first time. But both Ukraine and I are doing this for the last time. I am initiating consultations in the framework of the Budapest Memorandum. The Minister of Foreign Affairs was commissioned to convene them. If they do not happen again or their results do not guarantee security for our country, Ukraine will

have every right to believe that the Budapest Memorandum is not working and all the package decisions of 1994 are in doubt.

I also propose to convene a summit of permanent members of the UN Security Council in the coming weeks with the participation of Ukraine, Germany and Turkey in order to address security challenges in Europe. And elaborate new, effective security guarantees for Ukraine. Guarantees today, as long as we are not a member of the Alliance and in fact are in the gray zone - in a security vacuum.

What else can we do now? Continue to effectively support Ukraine and its defense capabilities. Provide Ukraine with a clear European perspective, the tools of support available to candidate countries, and clear and comprehensive timeframes for joining the Alliance.

Support the transformation in our country. Establish a Stability and Reconstruction Fund for Ukraine, a land-lease program, the supply of the latest weapons, machinery and equipment for our army - an army that protects the whole of Europe.

Develop an effective package of preventive sanctions to deter aggression. Guarantee Ukraine's energy security, ensure its integration into the EU energy market when Nord Stream 2 is used as a weapon.

All these questions need answers.

So far we have silence instead of them. And as long as there is silence, there will be no silence in the east of our state. That is - in Europe. That is - in the whole world. I hope the whole world finally understands this, Europe understands.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I thank all the states that supported Ukraine today.

In words, in declarations, in concrete help. Those who are on our side today. On the side of truth and international law. I'm not calling you by name - I don't want some other countries to be ashamed. But this is their business, this is their karma. And this is on their conscience. However, I do not know how they will be able to explain their actions to the two soldiers killed and three wounded in Ukraine today.

And most importantly - to three girls from Kyiv. One is ten years old, the second is six, and the third is only one. Today they were left without a father. At 6 o'clock in the morning Central European Time. When the Ukrainian intelligence officer, Captain Anton Sydorov was killed as a result of artillery fire prohibited by the Minsk agreements. I don't know what he thought at the last moment of his life. He definitely didn't know what agenda someone needs to meet to end the war.

But he knows exactly the answer to the question I asked at the beginning. He knows exactly who of us is lying.

UKRAINE

May his memory live forever. May the memory of all those who died today and during the war in the east of our state live forever.

Thank you.

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Address to the nation about the beginning of Russian aggression

24.02.2022

Citizens of Ukraine.

What do we hear today? It's not just rocket explosions, battles, the roar of aircraft. It is the sound of a new Iron Curtain lowering and closing Russia away from the civilized world. Our national task is to make this curtain pass not through our Ukrainian territory, but at the home of Russians.

The Ukrainian army, our border guards, police and special services stopped the enemy's attacks. In the language of conflict, this can be called an operational pause. In Donbas, our Armed Forces are doing great, the Kharkiv direction is very difficult, the forces for the defense of the city are working, they are reliable, they are our men. The most problematic situation today is in the south. Our troops are fighting fierce battles in the suburbs of Kherson. The enemy is pushing out of the occupied Crimea, trying to advance towards Melitopol. In the north of the country, the enemy is slowly advancing in the Chernihiv region, but there are forces to hold it. Reliable defense is built in the Zhytomyr region. Enemy paratroopers in Hostomel are blocked, troops are ordered to destroy them.

Yes, we, unfortunately, have losses, losses of our heroes. Yes, we have captured Russian soldiers. Our doctors are helping some of them - those who have surrendered. Many Russian aircraft and many armored vehicles were destroyed.

Yes, we see that many Russians are shocked by what is happening. Some Russians are already calling on social media that they are against the war. We see it. But the leadership of the Russian Federation is unlikely to see it.

So please.

If you hear us, if you understand us, if you understand that you are attacking an independent country, please go out to the squares and address the President of your country.

We are Ukrainians. We are on our land. You are Russians. Now your military has started a war. The war in our state. I would very much like you to speak on Red Square or somewhere else on the streets of your capital, in Moscow, St. Petersburg and other cities in Russia. Not only in Instagram - it is very important. What do we see at this hour? For the world community, Russia is becoming an analogue of the so-called DPR - this is complete isolation. I am in constant contact with the leaders of partner countries and international organizations. Russia has already begun receiving the first sanctions from a large package of sanctions, the most powerful in world history.

UKRAINE

No one will be able to convince or force us, Ukrainians, to give up our freedom, our independence, our sovereignty. But it seems that the Russian leadership is trying to do this by destroying the potential of their country. Everything that Russia has done since 2000 can now be burned live in front of the world.

We emphasize that Ukraine did not choose the path of war. But Ukraine offers to return to peace.

What can Ukrainians do? Help the national defense. Join the ranks of the Armed Forces of Ukraine and territorial defense units. Any citizen with combat experience will now be useful. It is up to you and all of us whether the enemy will be able to advance further into the territory of our independent state. Please help the volunteer community and the medical system, for example by donating blood.

Politicians and community leaders - help people, ensure normal life on the ground as much as possible. Everyone should take care of their loved ones and take care of those neighbors or acquaintances who need it. The duty of journalists, an important duty, is to defend democracy and freedom in Ukraine.

I spoke today with many leaders - the United Kingdom, Turkey, France, Germany, the EU, the United States, Sweden, Romania, Poland, Austria and others. If you, dear European leaders, dear world leaders, leaders of the free world, do not help us today, then tomorrow the war will knock on your door.

Glory to the Armed Forces of Ukraine!

Glory to Ukraine!

Volodymyr Zelenskyy
Speech at the NATO Summit in Madrid
29.06.2022

Dear Mr. Secretary General!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

I am grateful for the opportunity to address you today at the NATO Summit, which will be crucial and groundbreaking.

Today is really the beginning of a new history. Not just for NATO's eastern flank, but for the entire Alliance. For the whole Euro-Atlantic community. In a time of extremely aggressive Kremlin, the world needs an extremely bold Alliance.

And I am sure that the next summit in a year will show the results of this summit and what the future of NATO will be. I am grateful once again for this opportunity, and my address to you at the next NATO summit, next year - with my direct participation, not this online format - will be a testament to our common victory. But next year could be a worse situation - if not only Ukraine, but also several other states, possibly members of the Alliance, come under fire from Russia. And then it will be our common failure - Ukraine and NATO.

You are all well aware of what Russia's goals really are. For many years it has been threatening to start a war. Threatened - if Ukraine joins NATO. But Ukraine is not in NATO, and Russia's full-scale war against our state has been ongoing for 126 days - after 8 years of war in Donbas. So why has everyone believed for decades that it was NATO that could provoke Russia into something by its actions?

Russia's goals are known. They are obvious. The Russian leadership sees the world differently. Not like you. They see Lithuania, for example, not as a member of your Alliance, but as a republic of the Soviet Union. For us, it is an independent state and has long been a former republic of the USSR, for us it is the past, and they see it as a possible future, they want to enslave it again. They consider it that way. They see it that way. And the same goes for every country that is Russia's neighbor. For every state that was once under Moscow's influence.

Only now - at this summit - will you identify Russia as your main threat, but you have been an enemy for them for a really long time already. And the ideology of Russia is based on this, it is reflected one hundred percent in its propaganda, its task is to break you, to put pressure on you. And it is surprising that the work of propagandists, Russian television in some of your countries continues! This is not about freedom of speech. This is a concrete preparation of war against you, within your states.

UKRAINE

And please look at our state - what it can lead to in yours! Russia's tactics are very simple. It destroys everything - houses, shopping malls, schools, hospitals. More than 2,800 missiles since February 24, and the vast majority were aimed at civilian targets! What is it for? What are the bombs for? What are total artillery strikes for?

The Russian army is doing everything possible to force as many people as possible to leave their cities. So that there is nothing but ruins. And then the so-called "second army of the world" enters these cities - already empty and already dead. And it does not want to stop in Donbas or somewhere in the south of Ukraine, it wants to absorb city after city, all of us, and then all in Europe, whom the Russian leadership considers its property, not independent states. This is Russia's real goal.

The question is - who is next for it? Moldova? Or the Baltic countries? Or Poland? The answer is - all of them.

The same goes, by the way, with the food crisis - with the blockade of Ukrainian ports, with the famine that Russia is provoking. What is the real target? You! The same! Hunger is a tool, a means. And its real goal is to put pressure on you, and it's chaos, it's new waves of migration to Europe.

Isn't that the case with energy? Why is Russia pulling the gas noose? Why is it putting pressure on Europe? For you to ask. For you to be humiliated. For you to be completely dependent. So that you can be forced to give up your freedom, your democracy and your values - for the sake of certain interests of the Russian leadership.

We need to see the real goals of Russia. And if they were different, now there would be no desire of Finland and Sweden to join the Alliance - to get common security.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

While democracies were calling on the Russian leadership to have reason and morality, Russia was accumulating power and missiles. You, the democratic leaders, have urged it to respect international law, but tyrants understand force. And force only! And this is clearly seen in those areas of Ukraine where the Russian army has been severely rebuffed.

Ukraine commends the decision on the accession of Finland and Sweden to the Alliance. And it is very good that this has happened now - before Russia could start acting against these states as well. But is Russia doing anything against them now given this decision? No, and you see it.

The Russian leadership has publicly stated that the Leningrad streets taught them the rules of life. There, any attempts at dialogue and appeasement are perceived only as weakness and fear. There, you don't make a phone call to anyone to talk when you have to hit back. There, you either hit or lose. This is exactly how the Russian state sees the

world right now. And this vision cannot be ignored, its true goals cannot be ignored. You need to answer them. And I'm sure you all know how to respond.

In fact, our goals - the goals of Ukraine - are exactly the same as yours. We are interested in security and stability on the European continent and in the world. It is in our interest that the lives of nations are determined not by the infamous Munich speech of one leader, but by international law. We are interested in the absence of any "gray zones" and territories of total war, where there is nothing left but ruins. You are also interested in this.

Helping Ukraine end this war by winning on the battlefield now - that is, giving a really strong answer to what Russia is doing - is what we and each of your states and the whole Alliance, the whole Euro-Atlantic community need. If you really identify Russia as your threat, your main threat, you must fully support its main - the first - target. This is not a war of Russia only against Ukraine, this is a war for the right to dictate conditions in Europe. For what the future world order will be like. That is why it is absolutely necessary to support Ukraine right now with weapons, finances and political sanctions against Russia that will stop its ability to pay for the war.

Ukraine needs modern missile and air defense - and you have these systems. By providing them to us, you can completely break Russia's tactics to destroy cities and terrorize the civilian population of Ukraine. This is a fundamental thing. The distance from Kyiv to Madrid is less than the range of the missiles used against us today. Can one state respond to such a threat without the help of partners? You can provide this help. And we are grateful for the help you have already given.

Russia relies primarily on artillery on the battlefield. On artillery superiority. Dozens of times more strikes than we currently can respond with. Ukraine has already received modern artillery systems - and I am very grateful to you. But the war continues and it is a war in which artillery is of great importance. The war should not drag on. To prevent this, we need to break the Russian artillery advantage - a significant advantage, we need much more such modern systems, modern artillery.

Financial support for Ukraine is no less important than aid with weapons. Russia still receives billions every day - and spends them on the war. We have a multibillion-dollar deficit - we do not have oil and gas, which could cover it. We need about \$ 5 billion a month - you know that, and that's a fundamental thing as well. This is exactly what is needed for defense and protection.

And we need a new understanding of NATO's eastern flank. It is possible to get rid of the "gray zone" and guarantee security only together with Ukraine. Just think about one fact now: today, a non-NATO country, albeit with your support, has been holding back a

UKRAINE

state that you all officially identify as your main threat for more than four months. We are deterring Russia from destroying us and from destroying you.

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Russia must be isolated. It should not be in those international structures it wants to destroy. There should be no dialogues that don't make sense until it starts looking for that dialogue itself. It must seek dialogue itself, itself, and therefore seek peace. And, for the sake of peace, the understanding of NATO's eastern flank must be revised. Is it a coincidence that all Allies in the east, all our neighbors, stand for Ukraine's membership in NATO? No, this is not a coincidence. This is logic. This is the understanding of life in our region.

NATO's open door policy should not resemble the old Kyiv metro turnstiles: they are open, and when you approach, the turnstiles close until you pay. Hasn't Ukraine paid enough yet? Is our contribution to the defense of Europe and the whole civilization still insufficient? What else is needed then?

I can say what we need: we need security guarantees, and you have to find a place for Ukraine in the common security space.

There will be either urgent help for Ukraine, which is enough to win, or Russia's postponed war with you.

You are now adopting the strategy of the Alliance - and this is first and foremost a strategy for the security of your societies, your states. Strategy for ten years. 126 days of full-scale invasion of Ukraine. Cruise missiles, torture, children murdered, women raped... We do not have 10 years. Do you have them? Are you really sure about that?

Thanks again for the invitation.

Thank you very much for your attention.

Glory to Ukraine!

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Address to the nation on Independence Day of Ukraine

24.08.2022

The free people of independent Ukraine!

And that says it all. Just four words, but how much is behind them today. On the 182nd day of the full-scale war. How many symbols and meanings, feats and losses, joy and pain are in these words. And mainly how much truth is in them. Our truth. Truth about our present, with which it is impossible to argue, as it is impossible not to see and not to admit. We are the free people of independent Ukraine. After six months of the attempts to destroy us, we are the free people of independent Ukraine. And this is the truth about our future. The free people of independent Ukraine.

Six months ago, Russia declared war against us. On February 24, the entire Ukraine heard explosions and gunshots. And on August 24, it wasn't supposed to hear the words "Happy Independence Day". On February 24, we were told: you have no chance. On August 24, we say: Happy Independence Day, Ukraine!

During these six months, we changed history, changed the world and changed ourselves. Now we know for sure who is really our brother and friend, and who is not even a casual acquaintance. Who did not lose his name and reputation, and who worried for the terrorists to save face. Who doesn't really need us, and where the door is really open for us. We understood who is who. And the whole world learned who Ukrainians are. What Ukraine is. No one will say about it anymore: it is somewhere over there, near Russia.

We started to respect ourselves. We understood that despite any help and support, no one but us will fight for our independence. And we united.

We didn't have HIMARS yet, but we had people willing to stop tanks with their bare hands. They were not ready to close the sky for us, but we had people willing to cover their native land with themselves.

The Ukrainian people and their courage inspired the whole world. They gave humanity a new hope that justice has not completely left our cynical world. And it is still not force that wins in it, but truth. Not money, but values. Not oil, but people.

Yesterday the world was not united. COVID-19 clearly showed: it's every man for himself. Ukraine has changed this in six months. All world history textbooks will have a section "Times when Ukraine united the world". When democracy grew teeth again. When tyranny receives an answer in the language it understands.

Someone said: Europe is no longer a player. Weak, disunited, passive, sleepy. Ukraine invigorated the whole continent. Europe takes to the squares. Europe introduces tough

sanctions. Europe unanimously recognizes that Ukraine is a future member of the European Union.

Big business realized that money still smells. With blood, cinder, death. Corporations and brands are leaving the Russian market, and people have become more important than potential losses.

Never before in the world has public opinion had such an influence on politicians. Today, people dictate trends and rules of behavior to the authorities. Being indifferent, inactive and slow is a shame. Being indecisive and too cautious is a shame. Speaking sluggishly, vaguely and too diplomatically is a shame. Not supporting Ukraine is a shame. And saying about fatigue from Ukraine is a shame. This is a very comfortable position: fatigue is a cover to close your eyes. And today we hear from world leaders and ordinary citizens: we will be with you until the end, until your victory.

Dear people!

We always paid tribute to all the fighters for independence, called this day the main holiday, and the blue-yellow flag - a shrine, put our hands to our hearts while singing the national anthem, and proudly said “Glory to Ukraine!” and “Glory to Heroes!”. On February 24, we had to prove our words with deeds.

On this day, the second all-Ukrainian referendum actually took place. Again - the main question. Again - a decisive choice. But this time it was necessary to say “yes” to independence not in the ballot, but in the soul and conscience. Go not to the precinct, but to the military commissariat departments, the territorial defense units, the volunteer movement, the information troops or simply work steadily and conscientiously in your place, at full strength, for a common goal.

We all changed. Someone was born again. As a person, individual, citizen, patriot, simply as a Ukrainian. And this, of course, is good news. Someone disappeared. Did not perish, did not die, but dissolved. As a person, individual, citizen, as a Ukrainian. And this is actually not bad news either. We will not hinder each other anymore.

We made a choice. For some, it is Mariupol. For some - Monaco. But we know who the majority is. And we finally became truly one. A new nation that emerged on February 24 at 4 am. Not born, but reborn. A nation that didn't cry, didn't scream, didn't get scared. Didn't run away. Didn't give up. Didn't forget.

This flag will be everywhere it should be by right. Both in Donbas and in Crimea. The enemy thought we would greet him with flowers and champagne. Instead, he received wreaths and Molotov cocktails. He was waiting for an ovation, but hears “claps”.

The occupier believed that in a few days he would be on parade in our capital's downtown. Today, you can see this “parade” on Khreshchatyk. The proof that enemy equipment can appear in the center of Kyiv only in such form. Burnt, wrecked and

destroyed. It doesn't matter to us what kind of army you have, what matters to us is our land. We will fight for it until the end.

We are holding on for six months. It is difficult for us, but we clenched our fists fighting for our fate. Every new day is a new reason not to give up. Because, having gone through so much, we have no right not to reach the end. What is the end of the war for us? We used to say: peace. Now we say: victory.

We will not seek an understanding with the terrorists. Although we understand the Russian language that you came to defend. And killed thousands of people you came to liberate. And Johnson, who speaks English, is much more understandable and close to us than murderers, rapists and looters who did it in Russian. And we don't sit down at the negotiating table because of fear, with a gun pointed at our head. For us, the most terrible iron is not missiles, aircraft and tanks, but shackles. Not trenches, but fetters.

And we will put our hands up only once - when we will celebrate our victory. The whole of Ukraine. Because we do not trade our lands and our people. For us, Ukraine is all of Ukraine. All 25 regions, without any concessions or compromises. We do not know these words, they were destroyed by missiles on February 24.

Donbas is Ukraine. And we will return it, whatever the path may be. Crimea is Ukraine. And we will return it. Whatever the path may be. You don't want your soldiers to die? Free our lands. You don't want your mothers to cry? Free our lands. These are our simple and clear terms.

The free people of independent Ukraine!

We are facing this day in different places. Someone is in trenches and dugouts, in tanks and IFVs, at sea and in the air. Fighting for independence on the frontline. Someone is on the road, in cars, trucks and trains. Fighting for independence by delivering what is necessary to those on the frontline. And someone is on a smartphone or on a computer. Also fighting for independence by raising funds so that those on the road have something to bring to those on the frontline.

We are facing this day in different circumstances, conditions and even in different time zones, but with one goal - preservation of independence and victory of Ukraine!

We united.

Happy Independence Day of Ukraine!

Glory to Ukraine!

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Address at a joint meeting of the U.S. Congress

22.12.2022

Dear Americans!

In all states, cities and communities. All those who value freedom and justice. Who cherish it as strongly, as we, Ukrainians, in all our cities, in each and every family. I hope my words of respect and gratitude resonate in each American heart!

Madam Vice President, I thank you for your efforts in helping Ukraine! Madam Speaker, you bravely visited Ukraine during the full-fledged war, thank you very much! It is a great honor, a great privilege to be here!

Dear members of the Congress – representatives of both parties – who also visited Kyiv! Esteemed Congressmen and Senators – from both parties – who will visit Ukraine, I'm sure, in the future! Dear representatives of diaspora – present in this chamber and spread across the country! Dear journalists!

It's a great honor for me to be at the U.S. Congress and speak to you and all Americans!

Against all odds and doom and gloom scenarios, Ukraine did not fall. Ukraine is alive and kicking. And it gives me good reason to share with you our first joint victory – we defeated Russia in the battle for minds of the world. We have no fear. Nor should anyone in the world have it. Ukrainians gained this victory – and it gives us courage, which inspires the entire world. Americans gained this victory – and that's why you have succeeded in uniting the global community to protect freedom and international law. Europeans gained this victory – and that's why Europe is now stronger and more independent than ever. The Russian tyranny has lost control over us and it will never influence our minds again. Yet, we have to do whatever it takes to ensure that countries of the Global South also gain such victory.

I know one more thing – the Russians will stand a chance to be free only when they defeat the Kremlin in their minds. Yet, the battle continues! And we have to defeat the Kremlin on the battlefield. This battle is not only for the territory – for this or another part of Europe. This battle is not only for life, freedom and security of Ukrainians or any other nation, which Russia attempts to conquer. This struggle will define – in what world our children and grandchildren will live and then – their children and grandchildren. It will define whether it will be a democracy – for Ukrainians and for Americans – for all.

This battle cannot be frozen or postponed. It cannot be ignored hoping that the ocean or something else will provide a protection. From the United States to China, from Europe to Latin America, and from Africa to Australia – the world is too interconnected

and interdependent to allow someone to stay aside – and at the same time – to feel safe when such a battle continues.

Our two nations are Allies in this battle. And next year will be a turning point. The point, when Ukrainian courage and American resolve must guarantee the future of our common freedom. The freedom of people, who stand for their values.

Ladies and Gentlemen! Americans!

Yesterday – before coming here to Washington DC – I was at the frontline, in our Bakhmut. In our stronghold in the East of Ukraine – in the Donbas. The Russian military and mercenaries have been attacking Bakhmut non-stop since May. They have been attacking it day and night. But Bakhmut stands. Last year seventy thousand people lived there in Bakhmut and now only few civilians stay.

Every inch of that land is soaked in blood. Roaring guns sound every hour. Trenches in the Donbas change hands several times a day in fierce combat and even hand fighting. But the Ukrainian Donbas stands. Russians use everything they have against Bakhmut and our other beautiful cities. The occupiers have a significant advantage in artillery. They have an advantage in ammunition. They have much more missiles and planes than we ever had.

But our Defense Forces stand. And we all are proud of them.

The Russian tactic is primitive. They burn down and destroy everything they see. They sent thugs to the frontlines. They sent convicts to the war... They threw everything against us – similar to the other tyranny, which in the Battle of the Bulge threw everything it had against the free world. Just like the brave American soldiers, which held their lines and fought back Hitler's forces during the Christmas of 1944, brave Ukrainian soldiers are doing the same to Putin's forces this Christmas. Ukraine holds its lines and will never surrender! So, here is the frontline – the tyranny, which has no lack of cruelty – against the lives of free people.

And your support is crucial – not just to stand in such fights, but to get to the turning point. To win on the battlefield. We have artillery. Yes. Thank you. Is it enough? Honestly, not really. To ensure Bakhmut is not just a stronghold that holds back the Russian army – but for the Russian army to completely pull out – more cannons and shells are needed. If so, just like the battle of Saratoga, the fight for Bakhmut will change the trajectory of our war for independence and freedom. If your «Patriots» stop the Russian terror against our cities, it will let Ukrainian patriots work to the full to defend our freedom.

When Russia cannot reach our cities by its artillery, it tries to destroy them with missile attacks. More than that, Russia found an Ally in its genocidal policy – Iran. Iranian deadly drones, sent to Russia in hundreds, became a threat to our critical infrastructure.

UKRAINE

That is how one terrorist has found the other. It is just a matter of time – when they will strike against your other allies, if we do not stop them now. We must do it!

I believe there should be no taboos between us in our alliance. Ukraine never asked the American soldiers to fight on our land instead of us. I assure you that Ukrainian soldiers can perfectly operate American tanks and planes themselves. Financial assistance is also critically important. And I would like to thank you for both, financial packages you have already provided us with, and the ones you may be willing to decide on. Your money is not charity. It's an investment in the global security and democracy that we handle in the most responsible way.

Russia could stop its aggression if it wanted to, but you can speed up our victory. I know it. And it will prove to any potential aggressor that no one can succeed in breaking national borders, committing atrocities and reigning over people against their will. It would be naive to wait for steps towards peace from Russia – which enjoys being a terrorist state. Russians are still poisoned by the Kremlin.

The restoration of international legal order is our joint task. We need peace. Ukraine has already offered proposals, which I just discussed with President Biden – our Peace Formula. Ten points, which should and must be implemented for our joint security – guaranteed for decades ahead. And the Summit, which can be held. I am glad to stress that President Biden supported our peace initiative today. Each of you, ladies and gentlemen, can assist in its implementation – to ensure that America's leadership remains solid, bicameral and bipartisan. You can strengthen sanctions to make Russia feel how ruinous its aggression truly is. It is in your power to help us bring to justice everyone, who started this unprovoked and criminal war. Let's do it! Let the terrorist state be held responsible for its terror and aggression, and compensate all losses done by this war. Let the world see that the United States is here!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

Americans!

In two days, we will celebrate Christmas. Maybe, candlelit. Not because it is more romantic. But because there will be no electricity. Millions won't have neither heating nor running water. All of this will be the result of Russian missile and drone attacks on our energy infrastructure. But we do not complain. We do not judge and compare whose life is easier. Your well-being is the product of your national security – the result of your struggle for independence and your many victories.

We, Ukrainians, will also go through our war of independence and freedom with dignity and success. We'll celebrate Christmas – and even if there is no electricity, the light of our faith in ourselves will not be put out. If Russian missiles attack us – we'll do our best to protect ourselves. If they attack us with Iranian drones and our people will

have to go to bomb shelters on Christmas eve – Ukrainians will still sit down at a holiday table and cheer up each other. And we don't have to know everyone's wish as we know that all of us, millions of Ukrainians, wish the same – victory. Only victory.

We already built strong Ukraine – with strong people, strong army, and strong institutions. Together with you! We develop strong security guarantees for our country and for entire Europe and the world. Together with you! And also – together with you! – we'll put in place everyone, who will defy freedom. This will be the basis to protect democracy in Europe and the world over.

Now, on this special Christmas time, I want to thank you. All of you. I thank every American family, which cherishes the warmth of its home and wishes the same warmth to other people. I thank President Biden and both parties at the Senate and the House – for your invaluable assistance. I thank your cities and your citizens, who supported Ukraine this year, who hosted our people, who waved our national flags, who acted to help us. Thank you all! From everyone, who is now at the frontline. From everyone, who is awaiting victory.

Standing here today, I recall the words of the President Franklin Delano Roosevelt, which are so good for this moment: “The American People in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory”. The Ukrainian People will win, too. Absolutely. I know that everything depends on us. On Ukrainian Armed Forces! Yet, so much depends on the world! So much in the world depends on you!

When I was in Bakhmut yesterday, our heroes gave me the flag. The battle flag. The flag of those who defend Ukraine, Europe and the world at the cost of their lives. They asked me to bring this flag to the US Congress – to members of the House of Representatives and Senators, whose decisions can save millions of people. So, let these decisions be taken!

Let this flag stay with you, ladies and gentlemen! This flag is a symbol of our victory in this war!

We stand, we fight and we will win. Because we are united. Ukraine, America and the entire free world.

May God protect our brave troops and citizens! May God forever bless the United States of America!

Merry Christmas and a happy victorious new year!

Slava Ukraini! [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine!]

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

New Year greetings

31.12.2022

Dear Ukrainians!

This year began on February 24. Without prefaces and preludes. Sharply. Early. At 4 o'clock. It was dark. It was loud. It was hard for many and scary for some. 311 days have passed. It can still be dark, loud, and complicated for us. But we will definitely never be afraid again. And we'll never be ashamed.

It was our year. Year of Ukraine. Year of Ukrainians. We woke up on February 24. Into another life. Being another people. Another Ukrainians. The first missiles finally destroyed the labyrinth of illusions. We saw who was who. What friends and enemy are capable of, and most importantly, what we are capable of.

On February 24, millions of us made a choice. Not a white flag, but a blue and yellow flag. Not escaping, but meeting. Meeting the enemy. Resisting and fighting. The explosions on February 24 stunned us. Since then we have not heard everything. And we don't listen to everyone. We were told: you have no other option but to surrender. We say: we have no other option than to win.

On February 24, we began to create our victory. From many bricks – hundreds of other victories. We have overcome the panic. We did not run away but united. We have overcome doubts, despair, and fear. We believed in ourselves and in our strength. The Armed Forces of Ukraine. Intelligence. National Guard. SBU. Special Operations Forces. Border guards. Territorial defense forces. Air defense forces. The police. The State Emergency Service. All our defense and security forces. I am proud of you all, our warriors!

This year can be called a year of losses for Ukraine, for the whole of Europe, and the whole world. But it's wrong. We shouldn't say that. We haven't lost anything. It was taken from us. Ukraine did not lose its sons and daughters – they were taken away by murderers. Ukrainians did not lose their homes – they were destroyed by terrorists. We did not lose our lands – they were occupied by invaders. The world did not lose peace – Russia destroyed it.

This year has struck our hearts. We've cried out all the tears. All the prayers have been yelled. 311 days. We have something to say about every minute. But most of the words are superfluous. They are not needed. No explanations or decorations are needed. Silence is needed to hear. Pauses are needed to realize.

The morning of February 24... Hostomel. Bucha. Irpin. Borodianka. Kharkiv... Mriya... Kramatorsk Station. Toy... Chernihiv... Mariupol. Drama Theater. The word "Children"

written... Olenivka... Odesa. Multi-story building. Girl. Three months old... Vilniansk. Maternity hospital. Baby. Two days old... Azovstal...

It's impossible to forget. And it's impossible to forgive. But it's possible to win. We stood on our feet because there was something that kept us going. Our spirit.

Defense of Kyiv... Kharkiv... Mykolaiv... Chornobayivka... Snake Island... HIMARS... Antonivsky Bridge... "Cotton" pops... Crimean Bridge... Neptune... Cruiser Moskva... Russian warship... Izyum, Balakliya and Kupyansk... Kherson... And we pray that there will be Kreminna and Svatove, Melitopol, all of Donbas, Crimea.

We fight and will continue to fight. For the sake of the main word: "victory." It will be for sure. We are approaching it for 311 days. We gave it a lot of strength. But at the moment, when it seems that you can't go any further, remember that we have already passed with you.

I want to say to all of you: Ukrainians, you are incredible! See what we have done and what we are doing! How our soldiers have been smashing this "second army of the world" since the first days. How our people stopped their equipment and infantry columns. How an old man used his hands to stop a tank. How a woman knocked down a drone with a jar of tomatoes. How enemy tanks, armored personnel carriers, helicopters, shells were stolen during the occupation. How we fundraised for Shahed hunters, naval drones, armored vehicles, ambulance vehicles and Bayraktar drones in several hours. How we withstood all threats, shelling, cluster bombs, cruise missiles, darkness and cold. How we supported each other and the state.

Everyone is important in war. Who holds a weapon, the steering wheel of a car, the helm of a ship or plane, a scalpel, or a pointer. Everyone who is behind a laptop, who drives a combine harvester, a train. Who is at a roadblock and a power plant. Journalists and diplomats, utility workers and rescuers. All. Who is working. Studying at a university or school. And even those who are just learning to walk. All this is for their sake. Our children. Our people. Our country.

There are no small matters in a great war. There are no unnecessary ones. Each of us is a fighter. Each of us is a front. Each of us is the basis of the defense. We fight as one team – the whole country, all our regions. I admire you all. I want to thank every invincible region of Ukraine.

Kharkiv. Mutilated but unconquered. You proved to the enemy that being close territorially does not mean being close in mind. Kharkiv is a Ukrainian city. The hero city.

Invincible Mykolaiv. Heroically withstands all blows. The city on a wave that overcomes all storms.

Sumy city and the region. You were one of the first to feel the full-scale invasion of the invaders. Sumy region became a bone in their throat for them. Ordinary people

UKRAINE

made Molotov cocktails, burned enemy columns, took the first prisoners. Sumy region is a force.

Dnipro. The support and reliable rear of our front. You received people, you got the lives of wounded soldiers back. Despite constant barrages, Dnipro lives on.

Odesa. Sunny and friendly, now a fortress. World fortress. Which defends us and which defends the world. Feeds it by sending millions of tonnes of salvation by sea every day. Because it is Odesa Mama.

Kherson! You are heroic people! You have been under occupation for more than eight months. No news. No communication. Separated from Ukraine.

Thousands of you took part in actions against the ruscists. You did not know whether we saw it in Ukraine or knew about it. The occupiers lied to you that Ukraine abandoned you and would not fight for you. But you believed and waited despite everything. The face of Kherson is cut by fragments of shells, but the main thing is that we welcome the New Year free and together under blue and yellow flags. And therefore, we will restore everything, rebuild everything. Just like Chernihiv and Zaporizhzhia, and Kramatorsk, and Bakhmut.

Those that became a refuge for millions of Ukrainians: Rivne, Ivano-Frankivsk, Ternopil, Vinnytsia. I thank you! Those who receive and transfer millions of tonnes of aid from Europe and the world: Lviv, Uzhgorod, Chernivtsi, Lutsk. Thank you! Those who accept the evacuation of businesses, enterprises, universities: Khmelnytsky, Zhytomyr, Kropyvnytsky, Poltava, Cherkasy. Thank you!

And those who are waiting for Ukraine. And will wait. Donbas, Luhansk region, Crimea. Thanks to you, our warriors!

And, of course, Kyiv region and the city are our heart, which always beats thanks to you, all our Ukrainians!

We are all one family. One Ukraine.

This is the year when Ukraine changed the world. And the world discovered Ukraine. We were told to surrender. We chose a counterattack! We were told to make concessions and compromises. We are joining the European Union and NATO.

The world heard Ukraine. European Parliament, Bundestag, the UK Parliament, Knesset, the US Congress. The world felt Ukraine. Ukraine in the media. In the hearts of people. At the top of Google search. The world saw Ukraine. On the main squares in Toronto, New York, London, Warsaw, Florence, Sydney, and other cities. Ukrainians surprise. Ukrainians are applauded. Ukrainians inspire.

Is there anything that can scare us? No. Is there anyone who can stop us? No.

Because we are all together. It is what we are fighting for. One for each other. The best salute for us is at the warehouses of the occupiers. The best gift is the numbers in the report of the General Staff.

We do not know for sure what the new year 2023 will bring us. But ready for anything.

New achievements? We will be happy. New hits? We will be steadfast. Continuation of the fight? We will fight. And when we win, we will hug.

Dear Ukrainians!

A few minutes remain until the New Year. I want to wish all of us one thing – victory. And that’s the main thing. One wish for all Ukrainians.

Let this year be the year of return. The return of our people. Soldiers – to their families. Prisoners – to their homes. Immigrants – to their Ukraine. Return of our lands. And the temporarily occupied will become forever free. Return to normal life. To happy moments without curfew. To earthly joys without air alerts. The return of what has been stolen from us. The childhood of our children, the peaceful old age of our parents. So that grandchildren come to visit their grandparents during the holidays. To eat watermelons in Kherson. And the cherry in Melitopol. So that our cities are free. Our friends are faithful.

And so that our main figure and main success appeared in reports near the figure of 100,000 destroyed enemies, thousands of units of destroyed Russian equipment – it is 603,628 square kilometers. The area of independent Ukraine, as it was since 1991. As it will always be.

May the New Year bring all this. We are ready to fight for it. That’s why each of us is here. I’m here. We are here. You are here. Everyone is here. We are all Ukraine.

Glory to Ukraine!

Happy New Year!

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Address at the session of the United Nations General Assembly

19.09.2023

I welcome all who stand for common efforts! And I promise – being really united we can guarantee fair peace for all nations. What’s more, unity can prevent wars.

Ladies and gentlemen, Mr. Secretary General [António Guterres]! Fellow leaders!

This hall saw many wars but not as active defender against the aggressions. In many cases, the fear of war, the final war, was the loudest here – the war after which no one would gather in the General Assembly Hall again. The Third World War was seen as a nuclear war. A conflict between states on the highway to nukes. Other wars seemed less scary compared to a threat of the so-called “great powers” firing their nuclear stockpiles. So, the 20th century taught the world to restrain from the use of the weapons of mass destruction – not to deploy, not to proliferate, not to threaten with, and not to test, but to promote a complete nuclear disarmament. Frankly, this is a good strategy. But it should not be the only strategy to protect the world from this final war.

Ukraine gave up its third largest nuclear arsenal. The world then decided Russia should become a keeper of such power. Yet, history shows it was Russia who deserved nuclear disarmament the most, back in 1990s. And Russia deserves it now – terrorists have no right to hold nuclear weapons. But truly not the nukes are the scariest now. While nukes remain in place, the mass destruction is gaining its momentum. The aggressor is weaponizing many other things and those things are used not only against our country but against all of yours as well.

Fellow leaders!

There are many conventions that restrict weapons but there are no real restrictions on weaponization.

First, let me give you an example – the food. Since the start of the full-scale war, the Ukrainian ports in the Black and Azov Seas have been blocked by Russia. Until now, our ports on the Danube River remain the target for missiles and drones. And it is a clear Russia’s attempt to weaponize the food shortage on the global market in exchange for recognition for some, if not all, of the captured territories. Russia is launching the food prices as weapons. The impact spans from the Atlantic coast of Africa to the Southeast Asia. This is the threat scale. I would like to thank those leaders who supported our Black Sea Grain Initiative, and program “Grain from Ukraine”. United, we made weapons turn back into food again. More than 45 nations saw how important it is to make Ukrainian food products available on the market... from Algeria and Spain to Indonesia and China. Even now when Russia has undermined the Black Sea Grain Initiative, we are working

to ensure food stability. And I hope that many of you will join us in these efforts. We launched a temporary sea export corridor from our ports. And we are working hard to preserve the land routes for grain exports. And it is alarming to see how some in Europe play out solidarity in a political theatre – making thriller from the grain. They may seem to play their own role but in fact they are helping set the stage to a Moscow actor.

Second, weaponization of energy. Many times, the world has witnessed Russia using energy as a weapon. Kremlin weaponized oil and gas to weaken the leaders of other countries. Now the threat is even greater. Russia is weaponizing nuclear energy. Not only it is spreading its unreliable nuclear-power-plant-construction-technologies, but it is also turning other countries' power plants into real dirty bombs. Look what Russia did to our Zaporizhzhia power plant – shelled it, occupied it and now blackmails others with radiation leaks. Is there any sense to reduce nuclear weapons when Russia is weaponizing nuclear power plants? Scary question. The global security architecture offers no response or protection against such a treacherous radiation threat... And there is no accountability for radiation blackmailers so far.

The third example is children. Unfortunately, various terrorist groups abduct children to put pressure on their families and societies. But never before the mass kidnapping and deportation would become a part of the government policy. Not until now. We know the names of tens of thousands of children and have evidence on hundreds of thousands of others kidnapped by Russia in the occupied territories of Ukraine and later deported. The International Criminal Court issued arrest warrant for Putin for this crime. We are trying to get children back home but time goes by. What will happen to them? Those children in Russia are taught to hate Ukraine, and all ties with their families are broken... This is clearly a genocide.

When hatred is weaponized against one nation, it never stops there. Each decade Russia starts a new war. Parts of Moldova and Georgia remain occupied. Russia turned Syria into ruins. And if not Russia, the chemical weapons would have never been used there in Syria. Russia has almost swallowed Belarus. It is obviously threatening Kazakhstan and the Baltic states... And the goal of the present war against Ukraine is to turn our land, our people, our resources into a weapon against you – against the international rules-based order. Many seats in the General Assembly Hall may become empty if Russia succeeds with its treachery and aggression.

Ladies and gentlemen!

The aggressor scatters death and brings ruins even without nukes but the outcomes are alike. We see towns and villages in Ukraine wiped out by Russian artillery. Levelled to the ground completely! We see the war of drones. We know the possible effects of spreading the war into the cyberspace. The artificial intelligence could be trained to

combat well – before it would learn to help the humanity. Thank God, people have not yet learned to use climate as a weapon. Even though humanity is failing on its climate policy objectives – this means that extreme weather will still impact the normal global life and some evil state will also weaponize its outcomes. And when people in the streets of New York and other cities of the world went out on climate protest – we all have seen them... And when people in Morocco and Libya and other countries die as a result of natural disasters... And when islands and countries disappear under water... And when tornados and deserts are spreading into new territories... And when all of this is happening one unnatural disaster in Moscow decided to launch a big war and kill tens of thousands of people.

We must act united – to defeat the aggressor and focus all our capabilities and energy on addressing these challenges. As nukes are restrained, likewise the aggressor must be restrained and all its tools and methods of war. Each war now can become final, but it takes our unity to make sure that aggression will NOT break in again. And it is not a dialog between the so-called “great powers” somewhere behind the closed doors that can guarantee us all the new no-wars-era, but open work of all nations for peace.

Last year, I presented the outlines of the Ukrainian peace formula at the UN General Assembly. Later in Indonesia, I presented the full Formula. And over the past year the Peace Formula became the basis to update the existing security architecture – now we can bring back to life the UN Charter and guarantee the full power of the rules-based world order. Tomorrow I will present the details at a special meeting of the UN Security Council. The main thing is that it is not only about Ukraine. More than 140 states and international organizations have supported the Ukrainian Peace Formula fully or in part. The Ukrainian Peace Formula is becoming global. Its points offer solutions and steps that will stop all forms of weaponization that Russia used against Ukraine and other countries and may be used by other aggressors. Look – for the first time in modern history, we have the chance to end the aggression on the terms of the nation which was attacked. This is a real chance for every nation – to ensure that aggression against your state, if it happens, God forbid, will end not because your land will be divided and you will be forced to submit to military or political pressure, but because your territory and sovereignty will be fully restored.

We launched the format of meetings between national security advisors and diplomatic representatives. Important talks and consultations were held in Hiroshima, in Copenhagen, and in Jeddah on the implementation of the Peace Formula. And we are preparing a Global Peace Summit. I invite all of you – all of you who do not tolerate any aggression – to jointly prepare the Summit. I am aware of the attempts to make some

shady dealings behind the scenes. Evil cannot be trusted – ask Prigozhin if one bets on Putin's promises. Please, hear me. Let unity decide everything openly.

While Russia is pushing the world to the final war, Ukraine is doing everything to ensure that after Russian aggression no one in the world will dare to attack any nation. Weaponization must be restrained. War crimes must be punished. Deported people must come back home. And the occupier must return to their own land. We must be united to make it.

Slava Ukraini [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Address at the UN Security Council meeting

20.09.2023

Distinguished Prime Minister [Edi] Rama!

I am grateful to the Albanian Presidency for arranging this meeting.

Mr. Secretary-General [António Guterres]!

Ladies and gentlemen!

Five hundred seventy-four days of pain, losses, and struggle have already passed since the start of the full-scale aggression launched by the state, which, for some reason, is still present here among the permanent members of the UN Security Council. Russia has killed at least tens of thousands of our people and turned millions into refugees by destroying their homes.

Most of the world recognizes the truth about this war. It is a criminal and unprovoked aggression by Russia against our nation, aimed at seizing Ukraine's territory and resources. But it is not just that. With its aggression, the terrorist state is willing to undermine all the dams of international norms meant to protect the world from wars.

And I am grateful to all those who have recognized the Russian aggression as a violation of the UN Charter.

Ukraine exercises its inherent right of self-defense. Helping Ukraine with weapons in this exercise, imposing sanctions and exerting comprehensive pressure on the aggressor, as well as voting for relevant resolutions, mean helping to defend the UN Charter.

The resolutions of the General Assembly have clearly recognized the fact that the only source of this war is Russia. But, this has changed nothing for Russia in the United Nations. However, these are the situations that have changed everything for the UN. We should acknowledge that the Organization finds itself in a deadlock on the issue of aggression. Humankind no longer pins its hopes on the UN when it comes to the defense of the sovereign borders of nations. World leaders are seeking new platforms and alliances that could reduce the disastrous scope of problems. Those problems that are met here, within these walls, with rhetoric, rather than real solutions, with aspirations to compromise with killers, rather than to protect lives. Life should be defended uncompromisingly to ensure successful protection.

But I would not be here today if Ukraine had no proposals precisely regarding solutions.

Yesterday, in my address to the UN General Assembly, I said that the Ukrainian Peace Formula had become the basis to update the existing security architecture in the

world, in particular – to restore the real power of the UN Charter and the rules-based international order.

Now I would like to present the details – concrete possible actions based on the Peace Formula, notably its point 5 “Implementation of the UN Charter and restoration of Ukraine’s territorial integrity and the world order”.

All in the world see what makes the UN incapable unfortunately. This seat in the Security Council, which Russia occupied illegally, through backstage manipulations following the collapse of the Soviet Union, has been taken by liars whose job is to whitewash the aggression and genocide being carried out by Russia. And all the UN actions – either by the Security Council or the General Assembly – that could have stopped this aggression, are shattered by the privilege granted by this seat to the aggressor. Veto power in the hands of the aggressor is what has pushed the UN into a dead end.

Today, no matter what nation you might be... A nation with hundreds of millions of people or a small nation... A nation that bravely defends its independence or a country whose long history of independence can help others... A state in need of help or a nation that can provide genuine support... A state that relies on its army, or a state for which the UN Charter, not its army, is the first and last line of defense... Regardless of who you are, the current UN system still makes you less influential than the veto power possessed by a few and misused by one – Russia – to the detriment of all other UN members.

These days, the word “inequality” has often been heard in the UN General Assembly. Inequality is mentioned by different nations – both larger and smaller ones. It is precisely inequality that renders the UN ineffective now.

I regret that so far the UN Security Council is just the most visible platform in the world. I believe that the UN is capable of more. I am confident that the UN Charter can actually work for global peace and security. However, for this to happen, the years-long discussions of projects for UN reform must be translated into a viable process of UN reform.

And it should not be only about representation here, in the Security Council. The use of veto power – that is what requires reform, and this can be a key reform. This can be what restores the power of the UN Charter.

Ladies and gentlemen!

Five hundred seventy-four days of the full-fledged Russian aggression are five hundred seventy-four reasons for changes in this Chamber. And the number of votes in favor of these changes actually amounts to billions. The absolute majority of people in the world aspire to live in a world free of aggression. In contrast to all of us, there are only a few obsessed individuals in Moscow. Veto should not serve as a weapon for those who are obsessed with hatred and war.

What we observe in the United Nations is an increasing support for the idea that in cases of mass atrocities veto power should be voluntarily suspended. But we also observe that Russia will not give up this stolen privilege voluntarily.

So, the UN General Assembly should be given a real power to overcome the veto.

This will be the first necessary step.

If it is impossible to stop the war because all efforts are vetoed by the aggressor or those who condone the aggressor, it is necessary to bring this issue to the attention of the General Assembly. In the event of two-thirds of the votes reflecting the will of nations from Asia, Africa, Europe, both Americas, and the Pacific region – a global qualified majority – the veto should be effectively overcome, and such resolution of the General Assembly must be legally binding for all Member States.

The second step. The UN Security Council must be fully accountable to the nations of the world. I welcome the proposals of various leaders to expand the representation of nations in the Security Council. The composition of the permanent members of the Security Council should reflect the current realities and justice.

Ukraine considers it unjust when billions of people do not have their permanent representation in the Security Council. The African Union must be here permanently. Asia deserves broader permanent representation – it cannot be considered normal when nations like Japan, India or the Islamic world remain outside the permanent membership of the Security Council. One should take into account the changes that have taken place in Europe, notably that Germany has become one of the key global guarantors of peace and security. This is a matter of fact. Therefore, it is also a matter of fact that Germany deserves a place among the permanent members of the Security Council. Latin America must be represented here – permanently. And the Pacific states.

However, we should not confine our attention to those in the top seats only. There is a need to expand the participation and access to the activities of the UN Security Council and its subsidiary bodies for all members of the UN General Assembly who are not recognized as aggressors.

At the same time, the Security Council's membership of any state should be suspended for a period of time when such a state resorts to aggression against another nation in violation of the UN Charter.

The third step. There is a need for a system to prevent aggression through early response to actions violating territorial integrity and sovereignty of states. It's time to do this. Nations of the world should agree on such a mechanism for responding to aggression to protect others, that everyone would want for their own security.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine has shown what can such a mechanism be. Among other things, powerful sanctions against the aggressor. Not only at the stage when

Bucha has already happened, but also at the stage of the build-up of an invasion army. Anyone who wants to start a war should see before their fatal mistake what exactly they will lose when they start a war. The issue of applying such preventive sanctions should be automatically submitted for consideration of the UN Security Council when any Member of the UN General Assembly reports a threat of aggression.

Ukrainian soldiers are currently doing at the expense of their blood what the UN Security Council should do by its voting – they are stopping aggression and upholding the principles of the UN Charter.

And now, I would like to focus on territorial integrity. This is an element of both the UN Charter and our Peace Formula that is inextricably linked to the issue of clearing the territory from the occupiers. Occupation is an inexhaustible source of dynamite under the international rules-based order. So, I will provide examples of concrete steps to be taken for the security architecture to be strong. Using Ukraine as an example. Concrete things. Concrete as we, Ukrainians, are.

First: full withdrawal of all Russian troops and military formations, including the Russian Black Sea Fleet or its leaky remnants, as well as the withdrawal of all mercenaries and paramilitary formations of Russia from the entire sovereign territory of Ukraine within our internationally recognized borders as of 1991.

Second: full restoration of Ukraine's effective control over the entire state border and exclusive economic zone, including in the Black and Azov Seas, as well as in the Kerch Strait.

In fact, only the implementation of these two points will result in an honest, reliable, and complete cessation of hostilities.

Ladies and gentlemen!

As a rule, reforms of such international institutions were made following major tragedies, major wars. We should not wait for this aggression to be over. Action is needed now. Our aspiration for peace should drive the reform.

When I was preparing the Ukrainian Peace Formula, I underpinned its points exclusively by the principles of the UN Charter and resolutions adopted by the General Assembly. This is precisely what enables the global nature of the Ukrainian Peace Formula. Nations that engage with the Formula realize that they are working for the rules-based international order – for the protection of territorial integrity and sovereignty of states, protection of human rights, prevention of aggression and genocidal policy. Naturally, the epicenter of such efforts should be in this very Chamber – the UN Security Council Chamber, and even to a greater extent, in the General Assembly Hall. If reform of UN institutions is necessary for this, then we should not be afraid of such reform. We are

ready to work together with those UN members, who have joined the Peace Formula, on relevant draft resolutions and amendments to the UN Charter.

And I would like to make it clear for everyone in the world, what exactly Ukraine is proposing while addressing the nations of the world and calling on them to join the implementation of the Peace Formula.

Each country can demonstrate its leadership within the framework of one or more or all points of the Peace Formula. On the basis of the points of the Peace Formula we form groups, where national security advisors to heads of state and diplomatic representatives work. These groups are tasked to elaborate a list of decisions and legislative proposals, requiring implementation to fulfill the relevant point of the Peace Formula. We are ready to hold the inaugural Summit of the Leaders, subsequently, ten conferences at the level of advisors, diplomatic representatives, heads of parliaments in accordance with the ten points of the Peace Formula. Later, these drafts prepared by advisors will be submitted for consideration by heads of state at the respective final Summit.

Thereby, all nations of the world that respect peace can actually participate in the restoration of peace.

Cooperation is always the key word for Ukraine in international relations. This word is also key for peace. So, let peace prevail! May our institutions and our cooperation be stronger.

I thank you for the opportunity to deliver this address. Thank you for the invitation and your attention!

Slava Ukraini [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

Volodymyr Zelenskyy

New Year address

31.12.2023

Dear people! Dear Ukraine!

The year 2023 is coming to an end. Another year of our independence. Another year of our fight for independence. Another year of war. War for our land. For our freedom. For each other.

Asking millions of Ukrainians about this year, you will get millions of different answers. Everyone will recall something of their own. Someone close to them. Everyone has something to smile about. Because it worked out. And everyone has something to cry over. Because of losses. Each of us fought, worked, waited, helped, lived and hoped this year. In our own way. Everyone.

But everyone will find something common to all Ukrainians in this year. The major result of the year, its main achievement: Ukraine has become stronger. Ukrainians have become stronger.

676 days ago, we were all challenged. Missiles were flying at us from all sides, and an enemy onslaught was approaching from all directions.

676 days ago, at this very place, I addressed you, Ukrainians, and reported the beginning of a full-scale war. We did not know then what lay ahead. Many did not believe we would last a week. Few believed we would make it through 2022, let alone standing through 2023. And today we are facing 2024.

Ukraine is alive. Ukraine lives. Ukraine fights. Ukraine advances, Ukraine overcomes the path. Ukraine gains. Ukraine works. Ukraine exists. And all together, this is not a New Year's miracle, not a fairy tale, not magic, but the merit of each of you. Each of the millions of Ukrainians. Everyone who throughout this year, day and night, proved: Ukrainians are stronger!

When, at the beginning of 2023, in January and February, we surmounted, without exaggeration, the most difficult winter in history. When we proved that Ukrainians are tougher than cold and darkness. Stronger than power outages and blackout threats. Ukrainians will cope with any energy shortage as they have no shortage of resilience and courage. We did not fade away in the darkness. The darkness did not engulf us. We defeated the darkness.

Our energy sector withstood. Our country stood strong. It overcame this year. And I want to thank all those who made this possible in the first place.

All our Security and Defense Forces. I am proud of every Ukrainian warrior. As long as you stand, Ukraine stands. I know how courageously and heroically you defend us.

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All this time. The time of tough, fierce daily battles. From the first minutes of January 1 until now, even on New Year's Eve, when the Ukrainian warrior fights and cannot afford weakness. You are holding back the evil that has become even greater. But it couldn't do anything more. Because you fought on every front and every street of ours, in each of our houses. You were strong. You did not surrender a single blue-and-yellow heart. Not a single kilometer of our freedom. It is you. All our warriors. Each and every one who proves: Ukrainians are stronger than evil.

And I want to thank all our people, our strong nation. Everyone who is here today. Everyone whom I want to tell: I am proud of all of you. Every Ukrainian citizen. Every strong person. And I know how difficult it is for everyone today. Everyone who has put their lives on hold. Who postponed everything for after the victory. Everyone who says: "I am working, and this is not a feat, but a duty. I am donating, and this is not a feat, but a norm." Everyone who works and fights every day because they know that wars do not end by themselves – they are ended. And victory is not received or granted – it is gained.

And to this end, today we have to live by the rule: you either work or you fight. Because we have the world's largest terrorist organization against us. And it is obvious how much more we have to do, how much more active we have to be, how much stronger our unity and struggle have to be.

This is known to everyone who does not ask themselves daily 'what can I do?' but lives by the formula 'I must do more than I can.' Because that's what the word 'to win' means. In our language. To overcome yourself, to overpower, to make an extraordinary effort and to do more than it seemed at first glance. Because in reality, each of us is capable of more.

Our heroic people prove this every day. Our heroes. Our medics, saving warriors on the frontline and civilians in peaceful cities and villages. Those who prove: Ukrainians are stronger than pain, wounds, and death. Our firefighters and rescuers, who show that Ukrainians are stronger than fire and rubble. Those who prove: Ukrainians are stronger than any circumstances, stronger than hopelessness. Our teachers, who educate children despite the war. Online, in person or by setting up a school in the Kharkiv subway. Our railway workers, our drivers, communication workers, engineers. Our volunteers, our diplomats, Ukrainian business, everyone who pays taxes and provides jobs to the Ukrainians, everyone who sows, reaps and gives Ukrainians bread, everyone who provides shelter to Ukrainians, everyone who makes shells and ammunition, repairs and builds, restores and revives, works every day, proves every day: Ukrainians are stronger than fatigue. And therefore, Ukrainians are stronger than this war. February 24 convinced us of this.

The war taught us a lot. It showed us a lot. It did a lot to us, changed us.

The war, unfortunately, separated families, took away sons and daughters, and at the same time united us into one big family. And on February 24, we made a choice. And the cold, emotionless truth of the war's realities is that this choice was different.

Someone stayed here, in Ukraine, someone fled, someone was besieged, someone evacuated their children, someone went to the front, someone rescued others, someone saved their family, someone left and stayed there, and someone left and returned home. To Ukraine.

And these are stories of people, stories of men and women. Those who could not stay at home and went to the front. And those who could no longer stay abroad, somewhere far from home, and returned. After realizing and saying to themselves: "I do care. I am needed. Needed for victory, needed for Ukraine." Those who proved: I am stronger than fear. Those who proved: I am stronger than doubts. Because I know that one day I will have to ask myself: who am I? To make a choice about who I want to be. A victim or a winner? A refugee or a citizen? And everyone knows the answer. And the answer is Ukraine. Because Ukrainians are stronger together. So it's time to be together!

And this is the time that all Ukrainians who are now in the temporarily occupied territories are eagerly waiting for. All those who have not lost Ukraine in themselves. Who have not allowed their minds and hearts to be occupied. All those who cherish Ukraine in their children. Cherish our flag. Hold onto the belief in Ukraine's return. Knowing that all expectations are not in vain. And I want you to feel our gratitude to you for this. And remember: without each and every one of you, Ukraine will be incomplete.

And today we are celebrating the New Year together. According to our time. And at exactly midnight we will sing our anthem – the anthem of Ukraine together. With love for Ukraine. And this love is stronger than the occupation. This love for Ukraine is the driving force that the invaders fear. And Crimea, Donbas, Luhansk region, Berdyansk, Melitopol, Mariupol – all ours – know this: the enemies truly fear you a lot. Not international organizations with political appeals, but the Ukrainian spirit of Ukrainian people who have proven, are proving, and will prove that we are stronger. Stronger than captivity. Stronger than the enemy. Stronger than this war. Because that's the kind of people we are.

And such people inspire the whole world – you can see that. And such a state is welcome in the European family. This is evidenced by the decision to open negotiations on Ukraine's accession to the EU. A decision that others have been pursuing for decades. A decision that was once hard to believe, about which skeptics claimed: "This is not fast, not tomorrow, almost impossible. Do not hope, do not believe, do not expect." But Ukraine of 2023 is determined, resolute, consistent, decisive, and persistent. Ukrainians are stronger than any blockades and vetoes, disbelief or skepticism. A country that is

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implementing extremely difficult and necessary reforms and changes during the war. And as a result, a country that is now awaited in the European Union. And these are not just words – these are official decisions, official documents. And this process will definitely have a logical conclusion – full-fledged membership in strong Europe. A powerful one. From Lisbon to Luhansk.

And this is a historic victory. There have been many such diplomatic victories this year. And all of them were not easy for us. The Ukrainian Peace Formula, which has already been endorsed by 80 countries. Security guarantees for Ukraine, which have already been acceded to by three dozen countries. The “grain corridor” that we were told of: “You will never make it without Russia.” We were blocked and blackmailed, but we found a way out. We did, and our corridor is functioning, and by today, it has handled nearly 13 million tons of Ukrainian grain. This year, Ukrainians proved that we are stronger than lies, stronger than PSYOP. Stronger than despair, discord, and despondency. By maintaining international support for Ukraine. And multiplying it. By opening new directions, new prospects for Ukraine. Having held 120 meetings at the level of leaders this year alone, which brought us 156 defense support packages alone. Proving once again that Ukrainians are stronger than any intrigues, any attempts to diminish global solidarity, to undermine the coalition of our allies. Instead, it has grown. The coalition of “Patriots”, the air coalition, the tank coalition.

And I would like to thank every country that has joined the coalition to return Ukrainian children abducted by Russia. And I thank all our partners for the fact that this year we already have Patriots, IRIS-T, HIMARS, NASAMS, Hawk, Abrams, Leopards and many more. And our pilots are already mastering F-16 jets, and we will definitely see them in our skies. So that our enemies can certainly see what our real wrath is.

And next year, the enemy will feel the wrath of domestic production. Our weapons, our equipment, artillery, our shells, our drones, our naval “greetings” to the enemy and at least a million Ukrainian FPV drones. All of which we will generously use. On land, in the sky and, of course, at sea. Our Black Sea. And this year, the enemy felt like never before: he has no place there. And our actions in the Black Sea have become a dark chapter in the history of the ruscists’ fleet.

This can be officially “confirmed” by their large landing ships, missile-armed and patrol corvettes on the bottom of the sea. And our Zmiinyi (Snake Island) is now without their snakes and tricolor.

Fellow Ukrainians!

This year, Ukraine has overcome 6,000 air alerts. Almost every night, it woke up to sirens and went down to the shelter to protect its children from enemy missiles and drones. Our air defense forces worked every night and every day, heroically defending

the Ukrainian skies. So that we could hear the ‘all clear’ call 6 thousand times. And go up 6 thousand times. Go upstairs. Look up into the sky and prove once again that Ukrainians are stronger than terror.

And no matter how many missiles the enemy fires, no matter how many shellings and attacks – vile, ruthless, massive – the enemy carries out in an attempt to break Ukrainians, intimidate them, knock Ukraine down, drive them underground, we will still rise. Because the one who brings hell to our land will one day see it from his own window.

676 days ago, I addressed you from this office, from my workplace.

Behind me then was a painting – a landscape of the Ukrainian land. Today, behind me are the chevrons of our warriors. And each of them speaks of our land, our sky, all of our Ukraine, our people, what we have accomplished and what we will achieve. They speak of everyone fallen. And everyone who is fighting. And everyone who will live on this land. And will be proud to be Ukrainian. Because the whole world will know: Ukrainians are stronger!

I wish everyone who has already found themselves in our common cause to always have those who will lend a shoulder and will not let you down in life. I wish everyone who is still hesitating to make a bold choice next year – to defend their own country, to work for it, to help it, to find themselves in their own country, because this is the only place on earth where we can all say that we are at home.

And just like last December 31, today we say: “We do not know for certain what the new year will bring us.” But this year we can add: “Whatever it brings, we will be stronger.”

And now I want to say the words that were considered banal before the war, but during the war they are priceless. I wish you, your families, your loved ones, and all your dear ones warmth and good health. To those who have a dear heart, may they live long. To those who have lost them, may they remain in your hearts.

To loved ones – time. As much time as possible. To children – fulfillment of your wishes. To all people – human happiness. And to our Ukraine – victory and peace.

Happy New Year, Ukrainians! Happy New Year, Ukraine! Glory to Ukraine!

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**Josep Borrell, High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy
and Vice-President of the European Commission**

Speech at the European Parliament plenary

1.03.2022

Madam President of the European Parliament, Mr .President of the Council,
High Representative,

Mr. President of the Ukraine, dear Volodymyr,

Mr. Speaker of the Ukrainian Parliament,

My Honourable Members,

Monsieur le Président du Conseil Européen [Charles Michel], Madame la Présidente
du Parlement Européen [Roberta Metsola], Madame la Présidente de la Commission
[Ursula von der Leyen], Président [de l'Ukraine, Volodymyr] Zelenskyy, Président du
Parlement ukrainien [Ruslan Stefanchuk],

[read in French: Dear Mister President of the European Council [Charles Michel], Dear
Madam President of the European Parliament [Roberta Metsola], Dear President of the
European Commission [Ursula von der Leyen], Dear President [of Ukraine, Volodymyr]
Zelenskyy, Dear President of the Ukrainian Parliament [Ruslan Stefanchuk]]

Dear members of the European Parliament,

I will try to share with you my thoughts on the meaning of the tragic events that we
are living and the provisional lessons that we can draw from them, especially for the
Common Security and Defence Policy, which I had the honour to try to develop and it
remains an intergovernmental policy. A policy which is still in the hands of the Member
States but cannot be implemented efficiently without the strong cooperation of the
Commission competences. I think this is the moment in which the geopolitical Europe
is being born.

Ça, c'est l'acte de naissance de l'Europe géopolitique. Le moment où nous prenons
conscience du défi auquel nous faisons face. Le moment auquel l'Europe doit faire face
à ses responsabilités. Le moment où nous prenons conscience que, pour la première fois
depuis la fin de la Seconde guerre mondiale, un pays envahi un autre et ce pays possède
l'arme nucléaire, ce qui augmente sa capacité d'intimidation. Cela me rend malade que
de penser à l'analogie historique avec les événements du début de la deuxième guerre
mondiale.

[read in French: This is the birth of geopolitical Europe. The moment when we
become aware of the challenge we are facing. The moment when Europe must face up
to its responsibilities. The moment when we realise that, for the first time since the end
of the Second World War, one country is invading another and that country has nuclear

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weapons, which increases its capacity for intimidation. It makes me sick to think about the historical analogy with the events at the beginning of the Second World War.]

But, it is really the return of tragedy, to which Europe is being confronted today. The return of tragedy, far from frightening us, should galvanise us. First, it releases the idea that the European project had lost its momentum because the horizon of the war has been faded. Unfortunately, not. This reminds us that the evil, the tragedy and the war never fade away. And it's about the relationship with war, with use of force, with violence, on which we have been debating for years, to find out whether Europe can counter it. This is why in recent years we have talked more about defence issues than in the past and we have begun to set up joint military programmes. That's why the European Parliament itself has voted to set this European Defence Fund, and the Member states have created this European Peace Facility that now we are mobilising in order to provide arms to Ukraine.

The European Council, in the next weeks, will adopt the Strategic Compass. And with the invasion of Ukraine by Russia, we must amplify our reflexion, adjust our means and anticipate our responses. Because one of the lessons that we had to learn from the invasion of Ukraine is that more than ever, Europe must think strategically about itself, its environment, and the world. It is no longer a luxury, it's a necessity. Europe must amplify its reflexion on security issues and the European Parliament has had an important role to play in this regard. We need to think about the instrument of coercion, retaliation and counter-attack in the face of reckless adversaries because all we need to understand is that to make peace, we need to be two, but to make war, it is enough to be one. This is exactly what Putin is telling us. And that's why we have to increase a lot our deterrence capacity. We'll need to increase our deterrence capacity in order to prevent war. And it's clear that our deterrence has not been strong enough to stop Putin's aggression. And since this aggression has started, we have reacted in the last few days in a way that Putin didn't expect. And we are showing him that we will never sacrifice our freedom, and the freedom of others, on the altar of our wellbeing and prosperity.

Being President of this Parliament in 2007, I had the opportunity to tell Putin, eye to eye, in the aftermath of the killing of a journalist, Anna Politkovskaya, I told him: "We are not going to change human rights because of your acts". And this is the moment to repeat, and to act on that. We will not share, we will not abandon the defence of human rights and freedom because we are more or less dependent on Russia. And we have to start working quickly, as the Commission has proposed, in order to cancel this dependency. Last Saturday, after having held another Foreign Affairs Council and attending the debate of the European Union Council, I was talking with you, President Michel, and you told me: "Are we doing everything we can? Is there something more

that we can do? Is that enough? Are we so powerless?”. And you told me: “Think, do, act. We have to push Member States to adopt decisions on SWIFT and to take Russia out of the financial system. Think about how we can arm Ukraine. Not country by country, one after all in an uncoordinated manner”. And you encouraged me to talk with Member States again.

In a few hours, we agreed on using this European Peace Facility in order to bring financial support and coordinate Member States on arming the Ukrainian army and people. In less than 24 hours, another taboo had fallen. And the President of the Commission immediately showing a strong leadership and start working in order to get an agreement with our international partners, in order to make possible to switch off Russia from the financial system. And you know what, now half of the reserves of the Central Bank of Russia are completely out of their control, they are frozen. Can you imagine? This is a coercion capacity. Three days ago, it was impossible and now it's possible. They start feeling the consequences in terms of inflation and the fall of their currency.

Yes, we have capacities. We have mobilised these capacities and we have to continue doing so, putting together the capacities of the Member States and the European Union.

I want to remind you that the European Peace Facility is not part of the budget that you vote. It is another budget. It is an intergovernmental fund, managed by the Member States. Because we claim that we, the European Union, are a peace force and that we cannot provide arms to anyone else. Yes, we can. Yes, we have done it. In the next budget, think about it. When you vote your next budget, use the budgetary capacity of this institution to put the ways and the means in order to face the next crisis and the next Russian aggression.

On est en train de travailler dans le domaine international pour bâtir une coalition pour condamner la Russie aux Nations Unies. Elle [la Russie] n'a pas eu un seul vote en faveur. Tout le monde en faveur [de la résolution] et il y eu quelques abstentions qui sont très significatives.

[read in French: We are working in the international arena to build a coalition to condemn Russia at the United Nations. It [Russia] did not get a single vote in its favour. Everyone [was] in favour [of the resolution] and there were some abstentions that are very significant.]

Ha habido países, tradicionalmente aliados de Rusia, que no han votado a favor suyo, se han abstenido. Y ahora hay que construir una coalición internacional para que en la próxima Asamblea General de las Naciones Unidas sea el mundo entero el que condene al agresor. Nadie puede mirar para otro lado.

[read in Spanish: There have been countries, traditionally allies of Russia, that did not vote in favour [of the resolution], they abstained. And now, we must build an

international coalition so that at the next General Assembly of the United Nations, it is the whole world that condemns the aggressor. No one can look the other way.]

Cuando un potente agresor agrede sin justificación alguna a un vecino mucho más débil, nadie puede invocar la resolución pacífica de los conflictos. Nadie puede poner en el mismo pie de igualdad al agredido y al agresor. Y nos acordaremos de aquellos que en este momento solemne no estén a nuestro lado.

[read in Spanish: When a powerful aggressor attacks a much weaker neighbour without justification, no one can invoke the peaceful resolution of conflicts. No one can put the victim and the aggressor on equal footing. And we will remember those who at this solemn moment are not at our side.]

Sí, hemos utilizado nuestra capacidad coercitiva, la capacidad de imponer - no necesariamente usando las armas. Cuando digo que Europa tiene que ser un hard power, la gente piensa únicamente en el poder militar. No, el hard power se ejerce de muchas más maneras. La capacidad de condicionar, the coercive capacity, la capacidad de imponer al otro otra conducta no se hace solamente con las armas. Se hace como ha propuesto la Comisión [europea] de una manera extraordinariamente eficaz, gracias señora presidenta [Ursula von der Leyen] y como usted ha impulsado en los debates del Consejo Europeo, gracias señor presidente [Charles Michel].

[read in Spanish: Yes, we have used our coercive capacity, the ability to impose—not necessarily using weapons. When I say that Europe has to be a hard power, people think only of military power. No, hard power is exercised in many more ways. The ability to condition, the coercive capacity, the ability to impose a different behaviour on others is not done only with weapons. It is done as the [European] Commission has proposed in an extraordinarily effective way—thank you, Madam President [Ursula von der Leyen]—and as you have pushed for in the debates of the European Council—thank you, Mr. President [Charles Michel].]

Tomar medidas como esta, que parecen de papel, que desde luego no mobilizan misiles, pero que tienen un efecto trascendental sobre la solvencia de un país e impiden que Rusia vaya a gastar el dinero que pagamos por su gas para alimentar la guerra.

[read in Spanish: Take measures like this, seemingly only on paper, which certainly do not mobilise missiles, but which have a far-reaching effect on the solvency of a country and prevent Russia from spending the money we pay for its gas to fuel the war.]

Esto es, creo, señoras y señores diputados, la lección más importante que tenemos que extraer de estas trágicas circunstancias. No podemos seguir confiando en que apelar al Estado de Derecho y desarrollar relaciones comerciales van a convertir el mundo en un lugar pacífico donde todo el mundo evolucionará hacia la democracia representativa.

[read in Spanish: This is, I believe, ladies and gentlemen, the most important lesson we have to draw from these tragic circumstances. We can no longer rely on the belief that appealing to the rule of law and developing business relations will make the world a peaceful place where everyone will evolve towards representative democracy.]

Las fuerzas del mal, las fuerzas que pugnan por seguir utilizando la violencia física como una forma de resolver los conflictos, siguen vivos y frente a ellos tenemos que demostrar una capacidad de acción mucho más poderosa, mucho más consistente y mucho más unida que la que hemos sido capaces de hacer hasta ahora.

[read in Spanish: The forces of evil, the forces that strive to continue using physical violence as a way of resolving conflicts, are still alive, and facing them, we have to demonstrate a much more powerful, much more consistent and much more united capacity for action than we have been able to present up to now.]

Hemos hecho mucho y hemos, sin duda, asombrado al mundo y sorprendido a Putin con una capacidad de reacción rápida y unida. Hay que seguir en este camino.

[read in Spanish: We have done a lot and we have undoubtedly astonished the world and surprised Putin with our capacity for rapid and united reaction. We must continue along this path.]

Y este acto, este momento parlamentario donde ustedes con sus aplausos quieren dar ánimos a las instituciones europeas para seguir en el camino que hemos aprendido, puede ser el momento en que los europeos entiendan que el mundo en el que viven es un mundo peligroso y para hacerle frente hace falta que refuercen su Unión.

[read in Spanish: And this occasion, this parliamentary moment where you with your applause want to encourage the European institutions to continue on the path we have learned, may be the moment when Europeans understand that the world they live in is a dangerous world and in order to confront it they need to strengthen their Union.]

La pandemia abrió la puerta a acciones innovadoras. La pandemia nos ha impulsado por el camino de unirnos más para hacer frente a los virus. Este momento trágico debe impulsarnos a unirnos más para hacer frente a aquellas acciones humanas que amenazan también la vida, la seguridad y la prosperidad de todos.

[read in Spanish: The pandemic opened the door to innovative actions. The pandemic has propelled us to unite ourselves more to cope with the virus. This tragic moment should prompt us to come together even more in order to face those human actions that threaten the life, security, and prosperity of all.]

Muchas gracias.

[read in Spanish: Thank you very much.]

Translated by PISM from Spanish and French.

Ursula von der Leyen, President of the European Commission

Speech at the European Parliament Plenary on the social and economic consequences
for the EU of the Russian war in Ukraine

4.05.2022

Madam President, dear Roberta (Metsola),
Honourable Members,

Next week, we will mark Europe Day. The 72nd birthday of our Union. This Europe Day will be all about the Union of the future – how we make it stronger, more resilient, closer to its people. But the answer to all of these questions, we cannot give alone. The answer is also given in Ukraine. It is given in Kharkiv, where Ukrainian first responders venture into the combat zone to help those wounded by Russian attacks. It is given in small towns like Bucha, where survivors are coping with the atrocities committed against civilians by Russian soldiers. And it is given in Mariupol, where Ukrainians are resisting a Russian force, which greatly outnumbers them. They are fighting to reaffirm basic ideas: That they are the master of their own future – and not some foreign leader. That it is the international law that counts and not the right of might. And that Putin must pay a high price for his brutal aggression.

Thus, the future of the European Union is also written in Ukraine. And therefore, today, I would like to speak about two topics. First about sanctions and second about relief and reconstruction. Today, we are presenting the sixth package of sanctions. First, we are listing high-ranking military officers and other individuals who committed war crimes in Bucha and who are responsible for the inhuman siege of the city of Mariupol. This sends another important signal to all perpetrators of the Kremlin's war: We know who you are, and you will be held accountable. Second, we de-SWIFT Sberbank – by far Russia's largest bank, and two other major banks. By that, we hit banks that are systemically critical to the Russian financial system and Putin's ability to wage destruction. This will solidify the complete isolation of the Russian financial sector from the global system. Third, we are banning three big Russian state-owned broadcasters from our airwaves. They will not be allowed to distribute their content anymore in the EU, in whatever shape or form, be it on cable, via satellite, on the internet or via smartphone apps. We have identified these TV channels as mouthpieces that amplify Putin's lies and propaganda aggressively. We should not give them a stage anymore to spread these lies. Moreover, the Kremlin relies on accountants, consultants and spin doctors from Europe. And this will now stop. We are banning those services from being provided to Russian companies.

My final point on sanction: When the Leaders met in Versailles, they agreed to phase out our dependency on Russian energy. In the last sanction package, we started with

coal. Now we are addressing our dependency on Russian oil. Let us be clear: it will not be easy. Some Member States are strongly dependent on Russian oil. But we simply have to work on it. We now propose a ban on Russian oil. This will be a complete import ban on all Russian oil, seaborne and pipeline, crude and refined. We will make sure that we phase out Russian oil in an orderly fashion, in a way that allows us and our partners to secure alternative supply routes and minimises the impact on global markets. This is why we will phase out Russian supply of crude oil within six months and refined products by the end of the year. Thus, we maximise pressure on Russia, while at the same time minimising collateral damage to us and our partners around the globe. Because to help Ukraine, our own economy has to remain strong.

With all these steps, we are depriving the Russian economy from its ability to diversify and modernise. Putin wanted to wipe Ukraine from the map. He will clearly not succeed. On the contrary: Ukraine has risen up in unity. And it is his own country, Russia, he is sinking.

Honourable Members,

We want Ukraine to win this war. But we also want to set the conditions for Ukraine's success in the aftermath of the war. The first step is immediate relief. This is about short-term economic support to help Ukrainians cope with the fallout of the war, like we do with our macro-financial assistance package and with direct support to the Ukrainian budget. In addition, we recently proposed to suspend all import duties on Ukrainian exports to our Union for one year. I am sure the European Parliament will put its weight behind this idea. But this is not enough for the short-term relief. Ukraine's GDP is expected to fall by 30% to 50% this year alone. And the IMF estimates that, from May on, Ukraine needs EUR 5 billion each month, plain and simply, to keep the country running, paying pensions, salaries and basic services. We have to support them, but we cannot do it alone. I welcome that the United States announced massive budgetary support. And we, as Team Europe, will also do our share.

But then, in a second phase, there is the wider reconstruction effort. The scale of destruction is staggering. Hospitals and schools, houses, roads, bridges, railroads, theatres and factories – so much has to be rebuilt. In the fog of war, it is difficult to come up with a precise estimate. Economists are talking about several hundred billion euros. And costs are rising with each day of this senseless war.

Honourable Members,

Europe has a very special responsibility towards Ukraine. With our support, Ukrainians can rebuild their country for the next generation. That is why today I am proposing to you that we start working on an ambitious recovery package for our Ukrainian friends. This package should bring massive investment to meet the needs and the necessary

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reforms. It should address the existing weaknesses of the Ukrainian economy and lay the foundations for sustainable long-term growth. It could set a system of milestones and targets to make sure that European money truly delivers for the people of Ukraine, and is spent in accordance with EU rules. It could help fight corruption, align the legal environment with European standards and radically upgrade Ukraine's productive capacity. This will bring the stability and certainty needed to make Ukraine an attractive destination for foreign direct investment. And eventually, it will pave the way for Ukraine's future inside the European Union.

Slava Ukraini [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine] and long live Europe.

Ursula von der Leyen**Speech at the European Parliament Plenary on one year of Russia's invasion and war of aggression against Ukraine**

15.02.2023

Thank you, Madam President, dear Roberta [Metsola],
Honourable Members,

Almost a year ago, on the night of 24 February, Russia invaded Ukraine and war was back in Europe. That night our thoughts and prayers were with our Ukrainian friends. We followed the news from the Donbas and Kyiv with unbearable tension. Would they be able to withstand the onslaught of the Russian invaders? Today we know, yes, they would. One year on, Putin's perfidious plans continue to be foiled by the brave Ukrainian nation. One year on, Russia has completely alienated itself from Europe, its most important economic relationship, and is isolated on the world stage. One year on, this Parliament welcomed the Ukrainian President, Volodymyr Zelenskyy, as the true hero he is. And one year on, Putin's imperial fantasies have woken up to a bleak reality, while Ukraine's dreams are stronger than ever. And they will prevail.

Honourable Members,

What a difference one year of unity and resolve can make. In the early hours of 24 February, when Russian tanks rolled into Ukraine, a whole continent held its breath. Some predicted that Ukraine would fall in a matter of days. But instead, the legendary bravery of the Ukrainian people stunned the world. Their fierce resistance at the gates of Kyiv. The civilians who stopped Russian tanks in the south. The counter-offensive of Ukraine's armed forces in Kharkiv and Kherson. We can never match the sacrifice and the bravery of the Ukrainian people. But we can stand firmly by their side. And that is what we did. A whole continent has mobilised. From the volunteers of Warsaw station, who welcomed Ukrainians fleeing Putin's bombs, to all citizens and companies, which have cut their electricity consumption. Together with you, Honourable Members, we have focused on three main goals.

First, to support Ukraine's resistance against the invader unwaveringly. Second, to undermine Russia's war machine. Third, to build Ukraine's European future together. These three strands of action have guided us over the last year and will continue to guide us in the months to come.

Let me begin with our continued support for Ukraine's resistance. Since the war began, the European Union has provided Ukraine with EUR 67 billion in economic, humanitarian and military support: from budget support to aid for a rapid recovery, from energy to military capabilities, from humanitarian aid to aid for refugees. All of

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it a material contribution to Ukraine's war effort. Putin wanted the collapse of the Ukrainian State. We have helped Ukraine to stay operational, even during its darkest hours. Europe has galvanised Ukraine's resistance, and we will continue to do so. We will ensure a steady flow of financial aid throughout 2023. The first instalment of this EUR 18 billion package has already arrived in Ukraine. Our support will continue to be stable and predictable, every month. This is what Europe promised. And we have kept our promise.

Europe is also supporting Ukrainian firms and workers, who are still operating despite the war. To do so, we have harnessed the power of our single market. We have integrated our economies, brought our people together, twinned our towns and cities and synchronised our electricity grids. Our solidarity lanes allow Ukraine to export its goods to the whole world. This has already brought in EUR 20 billion in revenue for Ukrainian firms during the war. And we can do more.

During our visit to Kyiv, we agreed on a roadmap to further improve Ukraine's access to our single market. Putin wanted to shatter Ukraine's European dream. Today Ukraine is moving towards the European Union more quickly and more decisively than ever.

At the same time, we are weakening Russia's ability to maintain its war machine. This is my second point. With nine packages of sanctions in place, the Russian economy is going backwards. And to keep up this strong pressure, we are proposing a tenth package of measures. With new trade bans and technology export controls to Russia. This package is worth a total of EUR 11 billion. We propose, among other things export restrictions on multiple electronic components used in Russian armed systems – such as drones, missiles, helicopters. But there are also hundreds of Iranian-made drones used by Russia on the battlefields in Ukraine. These Iranian made drones kill Ukrainian civilians – this is atrocious! So for the first time we are also proposing to sanction Iranian entities including those linked to Iran's Revolutionary Guard. It is our duty to sanction them, and confront Iran about the supply of drones and the transfer of know-how to build production sites in Russia.

Putin assumed that our support for Ukraine would not last. He thought it would be easy to hold Europe to ransom, because of our dependence on Russian oil and gas. But he was wrong there too. Today, one year after the war began, he has already lost the energy war he started. We have repositioned ourselves, thanks to reliable partners, and the results can be seen. Russia's income from sales of gas to Europe has shrunk by two thirds. The oil price cap means that Russia is losing EUR 160 million in revenue every day. Gas prices in Europe are lower today than before Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and Europe is now investing in clean energies and energy independence as never before. In expanding renewable energies, we are breaking one record after another. Last year, for the first time, we generated more electricity from wind and solar than from gas.

With European unity and a smart energy policy, we have withstood Russian pressure and freed ourselves from our energy dependency. Our economy today is performing significantly better than forecast and, at the beginning of the week, we were able to revise our growth predictions upwards. By contrast, the Kremlin is having to sell gold reserves in order to plug the gaps left by the lack of oil revenue. Putin's attempt to blackmail Europe using energy has been an abject failure.

Honourable Members,

President Zelenskyy has often spoken to me about what keeps the people of Ukraine going amid the horrors of war. Despite the massacres in Bucha and Irpin. What gives them hope, even after the bombing of Mariupol and Dnipro? It is the firm conviction that the future of their country and of their children lies in the European Union. And that is the third task facing us – to build a bridge of hope for the people of Ukraine, from the horrors of war, which they are experiencing today, to a better future in our midst.

Rebuilding Ukraine and its progress on the path towards our Union go hand in hand. You have heard it from President Zelenskyy in this hemicycle. I have seen it with my College in Kyiv. And colleagues at the Commission confirm it every day: Ukrainians are making tangible progress – while fighting a war. They know that accession to our Union is a merits-based process. They have passed legislative reforms that others thought would take years. They are making this progress because they are striving for Europe with all their heart and soul. Ukraine is a nation defined not only by its history and heritage. It is a nation defined by its dreams. And Europe is one of these dreams.

Distinguished Members,

Let us honour these dreams by standing up for Ukraine for as long as it takes. So that one day the representatives of the Ukrainian people will have their place in this very House.

Long live Europe.

Slava Ukraini [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

Ursula von der Leyen

Speech at the European Parliament Plenary on strengthening European defence in a volatile geopolitical landscape

28.02.2024

Madam President [Roberta Metsola],
Mr State Secretary [Mathieu Michel],
Honourable Members,

In the last years, many European illusions have been shattered. The illusion that peace is permanent. The illusion that economic prosperity might matter more to Putin than destroying a free and democratic Ukraine. The illusion that Europe on its own was doing enough on security – be it economic or military, conventional or cyber. As we look around us, it is clear there is no room for any more illusions. Putin used the peace dividend to prepare for this war. As a result, the world is as dangerous as it has been for generations. Russia's brutal war of aggression against Ukraine is now in its third year and is more entrenched and intense than ever.

We are seeing the potency and the dangers of a rising and disturbing league of authoritarians. North Korea is delivering order after order of ammunition shells to Russia. And Iran is providing attack drones, and crucially also the technology behind them, to inflict untold damage on Ukrainian cities and citizens. The continuing war in Gaza and the large-scale destabilisation in the Middle East point to an era of insecurity and conflict in the region and beyond. And we are also seeing the continued rise of aggressive economic competition and distortion, which brings with it some very real European security risks. So, to put it as bluntly as outgoing President Niinistö of Finland did last month: 'Europe has to wake up.' And I would add: urgently. We all know there is so much at stake here – our freedom and our prosperity. And we have to start acting like it.

We need to start working on the future of the European security architecture. In all of its dimensions and with all of the speed and political will that is required. Because the truth is, we have not been living with conflict merely since 2022, but for far longer. The threats to our security, our prosperity and our way of life come in many different forms, and we all know them. Some of them are obvious, some of them are hazier on the surface. Be it tackling political interference reducing our dangerous dependencies – a policy I have called de-risking – or be it eliminating hostile actors from our critical infrastructure. We Europeans must be on guard. This is not just about defeating bullies on the battlefield but across all our society.

The good news is: We have started a lot of that work already. In fact, the last years have not only served to shatter some European illusions. But they have also shattered

many illusions about Europe. That our unity would not hold in the face of a war on our continent. Or that our rules and divisions would hold us back in providing massive financial, military and political support. Well, over the last two years, Europe has shown and proven that it will support Ukraine for as long as it takes. And we have also shown and proven that a more sovereign Europe is not just wishful thinking.

At this point let me be clear: European sovereignty will make our partnerships stronger. It will never affect the importance and the need for our NATO alliance. In fact, a more sovereign Europe, in particular on defence, is vital to strengthening NATO. That is why I am pleased with the news that Sweden will soon become a NATO ally. And I want to congratulate Sweden under the leadership of Prime Minister Ulf Kristersson on the historic step for this country. At its core, European sovereignty is about taking responsibility ourselves for what is vital, and even existential, for us. It is about our ability but also about our willingness to defend our interests and values ourselves. This is what Leaders agreed with the Versailles agenda just after the start of the war to reduce our strategic dependencies in critical areas like energy, key technologies – you remember the semi-conductors –, economic capacities and of course defence.

Member States have stepped up. Just last week, the naval mission Aspides was launched to protect against the direct threat to the freedom of navigation. Freedom of navigation that serves as a bedrock of global trade in one of the world's most critical waterways. And Member States have stepped up their defence spending too. Their national defence budgets have already risen by 20% from last year. And NATO has just announced that it expects 18 of its members to beat the 2% defence spending target this year. That is up from only 3 members a decade ago. And together, we are now spending more jointly on common capacities and projects between Europeans. The European Peace Facility has mobilised EUR 6.1 billion to support the Ukrainian armed forces with lethal and non-lethal military equipment and supplies. The European Defence Fund is investing in high-end defence capabilities in critical areas such as, naval, ground, air combat, space-based early warning systems or cyber. And we have taken big steps forward in growing our defence industrial and manufacturing capacities. In the next weeks, we will announce award decisions under the ASAP programme. This funding will enable us to roughly double European ammunition production, to over 2 million shells a year by the end of 2025.

Honourable Members,

All of this progress shows that Europe has started to grasp the urgency and the scale of the challenge that is ahead of us. But there is a lot more to do. And we need to move fast. The threat of war may not be imminent, but it is not impossible. The risks of war should not be overblown, but they should be prepared for. And that starts with

the urgent need to rebuild, replenish and modernise Member States' armed forces. In doing so, Europe should strive to develop and manufacture the next generation of battle-winning operational capabilities and to ensure it has the sufficient quantity of material and the technological superiority that we may need in the future. That means turbocharging our defence industrial capacity in the next five years.

At the heart of this must be a simple principle: Europe must spend more, spend better, spend European. We will put forward some proposals in the next weeks with the first ever European Industrial Defence Strategy. One of the central aims of the Strategy, and the European Defence Investment Programme that will come with it, will be to prioritise defence joint procurement. Just as we did it very successfully with the vaccines or for example with natural gas. This will help us reduce fragmentation and increase interoperability. But to do this we must collectively send a strong signal to industry. This is why we will look at how to facilitate for example offtake agreements. They need security and the knowledge that products will be taken off. Or for example advance purchase agreements where we provide guarantees. This would give our defence industry companies very stable orders and most importantly predictability in the long run.

We will increase support for industrial ramp-up, as we are now doing with ammunition through ASAP. We will identify European Defence Projects of Common Interest, to focus efforts and resources where it has the biggest impact and added value. And we will focus on innovation to ensure Europe has that edge in the new technologies, which we see being deployed across the world in different conflicts. This must be a truly European effort. And that is why I am proud to announce that we will set up an Office for Defence Innovation in Kyiv. This will bring Ukraine ever closer to Europe and it will enable all Member States to draw on Ukraine's battlefield experience and expertise in industrial defence innovation.

Honourable Members,

Taking this step together on defence will not be easy. It will require bold decisions and political courage. And it will require above all a new European defence mind-set from institutions to industry to investors alike. That is why I am very encouraged by the words of President Calviño that the EIB is ready to do more to contribute to joint projects that boost the European defence industry. And I really call now on Member States to endorse this proposal. Defence industry in Europe needs access to capital. I would like to encourage our public and private lenders to support our defence industry and in particular small and medium enterprises. Also in defence, small and medium enterprises are the backbone of our industry. They are the driver of innovation and a critical factor in

the Single Market. And the topic needs undivided attention. This is why I am personally supportive of a designated Defence Commissioner for the next Commission.

And beyond that, I would like us to think bigger. It is time to start a conversation about using the windfall profits of frozen Russian assets to jointly purchase military equipment for Ukraine. There could be no stronger symbol and no greater use for that money than to make Ukraine and all of Europe a safer place to live.

Honourable Members,

Ultimately, this is about Europe taking responsibility for its own security. The simple truth is: We do not have the luxury of comfort. We do not have the control over elections or decisions in other parts of the world. And we simply do not have the time to skirt around the issue. With or without the support of our partners, we cannot let Russia win. And the cost of insecurity – the cost of a Russian victory – is far greater than any saving we could make now. This is why it is time for Europe to step up.

Long live Europe.

NATO

Jens Stoltenberg, Secretary General

Press conference following the extraordinary virtual summit of NATO
Heads of State and Government

25.02.2022

Good evening.

Allied leaders have just met to address the gravest threat to Euro-Atlantic security in decades. I invited NATO's close partners Finland, Sweden and the European Union to our summit. Because this crisis affects us all.

Russia has shattered peace in Europe. The people of Ukraine are fighting for their freedom in the face of Russia's unprovoked invasion. We deplore the tragic loss of life, enormous human suffering and destruction. Our thoughts are with those killed, injured, and displaced.

We call on Russia to stop this senseless war. Immediately cease its assault. Withdraw all its forces from Ukraine. And turn back to the path of dialogue. And turn away from aggression.

The Kremlin's objectives are not limited to Ukraine. Russia has demanded legally binding agreements to renounce further NATO enlargement. And to remove troops and infrastructure from Allies that joined after 1997. We are facing a new normal in European security. Where Russia openly contests the European security order. And uses force to pursue its objectives. The world will hold Russia and Belarus accountable for their actions. Russia as the aggressor. Belarus as the enabler. President Putin's decision to pursue his aggression against Ukraine is a terrible strategic mistake. For which Russia will pay a severe price for years to come.

NATO Allies and the European Union have already introduced significant sanctions. And many of our partners around the globe have joined us. We must stand ready to do more. Even if it means we have to pay a price, Because we are in this for the long haul.

At the same time, the Russian people must know: that the Kremlin's war on Ukraine will not make Russia more secure. It will not make Russia more respected in the world. It will not lead to a better future for your children.

In response to Russia's massive military build-up over the past months, we have already strengthened our deterrence and defence. Yesterday, NATO Allies activated our defence plans. And as a result, we are deploying elements of the NATO Response Force. On land, at sea, and in the air. To further strengthen our posture. And to respond quickly to any contingency. The United States, Canada and European Allies have deployed thousands of more troops to the eastern part of the Alliance. We have over 100 jets at high alert operating in over 30 different locations. And over 120 ships from the High

NATO

North to the Mediterranean. Including three strike carrier groups. There must be no space for miscalculation or misunderstanding. We will do what it takes to protect and defend every Ally. And every inch of NATO territory.

Leaders today also made clear that we must continue our support to Ukraine. The Kremlin is trying to make NATO and the EU provide less support to our partners. So our collective answer must be more support. To countries like Georgia, Moldova, and Bosnia and Herzegovina. To help them succeed with their democratic reforms, and pursue the path that they have freely chosen.

More than ever, this crisis demonstrates the importance of North America and Europe standing together in NATO. There is no security in Europe without a strong transatlantic bond.

Jens Stoltenberg

Speech at the Heritage Foundation

31.01.2024

Thank you Dr. Roberts, dear Kevin, Good morning all.

It is great to be back in Washington. And a pleasure to speak at the Heritage Foundation.

You seek to advance the interests of American citizens. And stand up for ideas that strengthen America, and the fundamental values that underpin this great democratic nation. Freedom, opportunity and prosperity. Today, these values are under attack by malign foreign actors seeking to undermine them. They are threatening our free world. They are openly contesting American power. And not just America. They are trying to trample over the global rules that keep us all safe. These are dangerous times.

China is modernising its military and developing new weapons, without any transparency or any limitation. It is trading unfairly. Buying up critical infrastructure. Bullying its neighbours – not least Taiwan. And seeking to dominate the South China Sea.

While China is the most serious long-term challenge, Russia is the most immediate one. Putin has brought war back to Europe, on a scale not seen since the Second World War. And is developing new strategic weapons to threaten the United States and its Allies. His war is not just about controlling Ukraine. It is about re-establishing Russia's sphere of influence. And shaping alternative world order.

Where U.S. power is diminished. NATO is divided. And smaller democracies are forced to kneel. Other authoritarian regimes in Iran and North Korea are also expanding their aggressive behaviour. Tehran is backing terrorists and militias that are attacking ships in the Red Sea. And American military bases in the Middle East. Just this week we saw the tragic consequences of the attack in Jordan. Pyongyang continues to test missiles that could reach South Korea and Japan. As well as the United States. China, Russia, Iran, and North Korea are increasingly aligned. Together, they subvert sanctions and pressure. Weaken the US dollar-based international financial system. Fuel Russian war in Europe. And exploit challenges to our societies, such as terrorism, disruptive technologies, or migration.

In these dangerous times, we must stand strong against any regime that seeks to undermine us. To do so, we must do three things.

First, we must ensure robust deterrence. Not to start wars. But to prevent them. And preserve peace. Any sign of wavering or weakness on our part will invite challenges from those who wish us harm. That is why NATO has implemented the most robust

collective defence since the Cold War. We have more forces at higher readiness. And more capabilities to protect our people, and our territory.

We need to remain decisive and strong in our support to Ukraine. Make no mistake: that is where we are being tested right now. Ukraine must prevail. And it can. But it needs our continued help. And let me recognise the leading role of the United States in supporting Ukraine. Not least in providing essential military aid. At the same time, we should acknowledge that European Allies and Canada also provide significant support to Ukraine, what they support, what they provide, in terms of military, financial, and humanitarian aid actually exceeds what the U.S. is providing. Since the outbreak of the war, the United States has provided around 75 billion U.S. dollars. Other Allies and partners have provided over 100 billion dollars. And measured as share of GDP, most Allies provide more than the United States. In addition, Europe Allies host six million Ukrainian refugees. European Allies were the first to provide tanks and long-range missiles to Ukraine. The first to provide fighter aircraft. And the first to train thousands of Ukrainian soldiers. Supporting Ukraine is not charity. It is an investment in our own security.

The United States has spent a small fraction of its annual military budget to aid Ukraine. With that, Ukraine has managed to destroy a substantial part of Russia's combat capacity. And again, supporting Ukraine is in America's own interest. If we cannot stop Russia's cycle of aggression in Europe, others will learn the lesson that using force against America's interests works. The price for our security will go up. China is watching closely. And supporting Putin. Let's remember, China and Russia are partners. Putin and Xi have signed an agreement of 'limitless partnership'. Beijing has failed to condemn Russia's invasion of Ukraine. It continues to spread Russian lies, and to prop up the Russian economy. It is Ukraine today. Taiwan could be tomorrow.

This brings me to my second point. We must organise ourselves for enduring competition with China. The U.S. has been doing this for some time. You shifted your policy on China in 2017, under President Trump. And since then, NATO has gone a long way in helping European Allies fully appreciate the challenges posed by China. And respond to it. It is clear that we must eliminate harmful dependencies on critical Chinese raw materials and products. Europe made the mistake to rely on Russian oil and gas. We cannot repeat that same mistake with China. Dependencies make us vulnerable. That is why we need to protect our critical infrastructure, strategic materials and supply chains. We must not lose control of our ports, railways, and telecommunications – like 5G. And we must not export technology that can be used against us. Managing the China challenge is not something the U.S. can do alone. And you don't have to. Through NATO, the U.S. has the support of 31 Allies and a vast network of partners. Especially in the Indo-

Pacific. NATO is working more closely than ever with Australia, Japan, New Zealand and South Korea. We are making our forces more interoperable. So they can work seamlessly together. And we cooperate on issues of shared interest. Including China. Together, we are much stronger.

Now to my third and final point. We must invest in our defence. NATO will remain central to this effort. Over many years, the United States has criticised NATO Allies for not spending enough on defence. Rightly so. And I commend the U.S. leadership on this important issue. But things have changed. All Allies have increased defence investments. Adding an additional 450 billion dollars. NATO Allies have committed to spending at least 2% of their GDP on defence. And many are exceeding that target already. For example, this year Poland will spend more than 4%. No other Ally spends more. With more money, we are boosting our defence industry. NATO creates a market for defence sales. Over the last two years, NATO Allies have agreed to purchase 120 billion dollars' worth of weapons from U.S. defence companies. Including thousands of missiles to the U.K, Finland and Lithuania, Hundreds of Abrams tanks to Poland and Romania, And hundreds of F-35 aircraft across many European Allied nations – a total of 600 by 2030. From Arizona to Virginia, Florida to Washington state, American jobs depend on American sales to defence markets in Europe and Canada. What you produce keeps people safe. What Allies buy keeps American businesses strong. So NATO is a good deal for the United States.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The Heritage Foundation stands for the power of ideas that keep America strong. NATO is an incredibly powerful idea. That advances U.S. interests. And multiplies America's power. The U.S. alone represents a quarter of the world economy. But together, with NATO Allies, we represent half of the world's economic might. And half of the world's military might. Together, we have world-class militaries, vast intelligence networks, more defence spending, and unique diplomatic leverage. More than an idea, NATO is a strong Alliance. Getting stronger, and bigger. With new Allies – Finland, and soon Sweden. And more partnerships around the world. Through NATO, the U.S. has more friends and allies than any other power. China and Russia has nothing like NATO. It is why they always try to undermine our unity. In times of growing competition and rivalry. NATO makes the U.S. stronger. And all of us safer.

This year, we will celebrate NATO's 75th anniversary. With a Summit here in Washington in July. It will be an opportunity to send a powerful message of unity and resolve in this challenging century.

Thank you so much.

CZECHIA

Petr Fiala, Prime Minister

Speech at the European Parliament

6.06.2022

Madam President, Dear Roberta, dear Members of the European Parliament, Madam President of the Commission, Dear Ursula, Mr. President of the European Council.

It is a great pleasure to be here today to present the Czech Republic's plans for our Presidency of the Council of the EU. This is the second Presidency for my country, but the first under the Lisbon Treaty.

We are building on the excellent French Presidency. It has managed to complete a number of proposals successfully. It was not easy to find a compromise on such a difficult debate like the Fit for 55 package in the area of climate, or on new rules for the digital economy.

But the most important thing that was achieved during the French Presidency was a united action in response to Russia's aggression against Ukraine. Our response was quick, it was tough and, most importantly, it was united. Six packages of sanctions were not approved easily. A number of Member States had to give up their positions, some of their economic interests and some of their comfort. But because we were convinced that it was right to stand up to Russia and to help our friend and ally – I mean Ukraine – we did it. Together we also granted candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova. It gave them hope and faith in the future and in joining free and democratic Europe. Our Presidency wants to build on this work.

And now, according to the European Parliament tradition, allow me to present the main priorities of our Presidency in my mother language, in Czech.

Ladies and gentlemen, the themes and priorities we want to address have been many months in the making, but February 24, 2022, turned most of our plans we had upside down. Our priorities reflect this new situation. We are at a time when there is a war going on just outside the borders of the European Union. The classic conventional conflict that many of us thought was a thing of the past in Europe. But in addition to conventional warfare, Russia is waging a hybrid war. It is deliberately triggering a refugee wave, using energy resources as its weapon and creating a food crisis through targeted attacks on infrastructure. We are fortunate that our membership of the European Union and the North Atlantic Treaty Organisation protects us from the most direct and tragic consequences that the Ukrainian people have to face.

When I visited President Zelenskyy in Kyiv on 15th March, together with the Polish and Slovenia Prime Ministers, I saw with my own eyes the heroism of Ukrainians who have fought and are still fighting for their right to exist and for the right to belong to our

Western civilisation. This once again reminded me that our values are not self-evident and need to be defended daily. The values for which Ukraine is dying today are values that were also defended by one of the founders of the modern Czech state, our first president, Václav Havel. It was his inspiring essay from 1996 that led us to the motto of our Presidency, “Europe as a task”. Indeed, Europe has many tasks ahead! Similarly, the Czech Presidency of the Council has many tasks ahead.

The main task in the period ahead will be to find a united and strong consensus on measures that will mitigate the negative impact of the current crises on our citizens as much as possible. Because inflation, energy scarcity or food crisis are threats that we can best face together. I believe that both the Council and the European Parliament will be in agreement on this.

Europe as a task is a commitment for us. Not a foregone conclusion, but something that needs to be constantly worked on, something that needs to be improved. And we need to make changes where things do not work as planned. Europe should lead by example: it should heed its conscience and rise to the challenge. But these solutions must be balanced so that too much emphasis on one area does not damage or neglect another, such as social reconciliation or our economies.

The Czech Republic will always try to carefully take into account all views expressed in our discussions. We must also avoid divisions among ourselves and always try to find agreement among as many of us as possible. But we also need to be more respectful of the views and positions of others, even if we do not agree with them directly.

Although Havel’s memorable words about Europe as a task were written in a different time, in a different Europe from than the one we have now, its basic message is still as strong. We take as our mission the motto “rethink, rebuild, repower” which reflects the challenges and problems of today’s Europe and our response to them.

The Czech Presidency will want to build a secure and prosperous EU. One that is true to the values of freedom and democracy. One that allows all citizens to travel and work or do business freely in the internal market. One that understands that we have a responsibility to the environment, which we must pass on to future generations in good condition. One where we build on what unites us but respects what separates us. That is the EU we want!

The five pillars of the Czech Presidency, which I would now like to present to you in turn, are in keeping with this objective:

The first priority is the management of the refugee crisis and the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. Russia’s aggression is having an impact on every state in Europe, whether directly or indirectly. One of the direct consequences is the most massive refugee wave since World War II. The Czech Republic is one of the countries

with the largest proportion of Ukrainian refugees per population. They make up over 3,5 % of our population.

We also have our bitter experience with Russian imperialism. We know what Russia's aggressive policies can do. The Czech Republic is therefore convinced that the EU's political and military support for Ukraine is in the vital interest of the entire Union, with fundamental implications for the future of the continent. For this reason, the Czech Presidency will consistently defend and support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, using all the instruments at the EU's disposal. We will emphasise a firm and united stance towards Russia, as well as maximum assistance to Member States in providing military support to Ukraine or in coping with the consequences of the migration wave.

It is equally important to look to the future. At the last European Council, we succeeded in approving Ukraine's candidate status. I am pleased that the European Parliament has also given us its vocal support in this regard. But the journey must not end there.

Another important task of the Czech Presidency will be the preparation of the post-war reconstruction of Ukraine. We must focus in particular on the restoration of infrastructure, the provision of basic services and economic reconstruction and stability. The European Union must play a fundamental role here. After all, this is what President von der Leyen and I demonstrated together on Monday at the Ukraine Recovery Conference in Lugano, Switzerland. Ukraine's road to the EU will be a long one, but we must work together to make it a success and strengthen the European Union.

The second priority is energy security.

The current crisis has fully revealed how existentially important it is for the future of the EU to ensure its independence from countries that threaten our security. We are, of course, talking about Russian gas, oil and coal. The path that the Czech Presidency wants to take is primarily to work on common European projects that free us from our dependence on Russia. The Czech Presidency will focus on energy security issues and the accelerated implementation of REPowerEU diversification of resources is an important part of this. We are ready to work on coordinating gas stocks ahead of the coming winter and to promote voluntary joint purchasing, following the model that effective during the COVID-19 crisis. We should always bear in mind that we may find ourselves in a situation where solidarity between Member States is needed more than ever.

Building the EU's energy resilience through the development of energy infrastructure and supporting all domestic emission-free energy sources, and their role both in ensuring the EU's energy security and in meeting climate goals, cannot be overlooked. The long-term goal of decarbonising the European economy goes largely hand in hand with the short-term goal of de-Russifying energy supplies. In order to become energy

independent from Russia, we need to take advantage of all the opportunities that our geographical conditions allow us. Due to the size of the Union and the number of Member States, there is no one single solution. Each Member State must be able to choose the energy mix that best suits its own conditions and that enables it both to meet its climate objectives and withdraw from Russian energy supplies. If we really want to meet these climate objectives, we must also be able to finance them. Today, you will vote on an objection to the taxonomy that the European Commission has presented. I would like to stress that this is a very fragile proposal which caters to a number of countries that will only be able to meet their climate targets as a result of these criteria. I therefore take this opportunity to ask you, not to reject this carefully negotiated and fragile compromise. Nuclear energy and gas from safe countries will be the only means for many Member States to reach our shared climate goals in the years to come.

The war on the European continent has shown the need to strengthen European defence capabilities and the security of cyberspace, which is our third priority.

Given the current geopolitical situation, strengthening European security and defence capabilities is crucial. NATO is a natural partner for the EU on this issue, and the implementation of the key themes in the Strategic Compass is an appropriate framework. We will work to bolster European cooperation by strengthening Member States' defence capabilities. In particular, the replenishment of military depots is urgent in the context of the assistance that Member States are providing to Ukraine. I consider it necessary to develop the European defence industry, including investments in reducing technological dependence on untrustworthy countries. In the long term, we will work to facilitate joint purchases of military equipment.

With the new era of digitalisation, new types of threats are emerging, and are increasingly being exploited by hostile actors. Therefore, we will also focus on cyber threats and strengthening Europe's resilience to hybrid threats from the outside. This concerns the fight against disinformation and the security of cyberspace and key infrastructure, including EU institutions. All this with the involvement of relevant international partners.

Already, the COVID-19 pandemic has exposed the weaknesses of the European economy and the overly unilateral dependence on certain countries. The strategic resilience of the European economy is therefore important and is our fourth priority.

Europe must be an industrial and technological leader. The key to this is a well-functioning internal market without unnecessary administrative barriers, which will strengthen the competitiveness of European companies. We therefore need to better understand the supply chains that are the backbone of our economy and, ideally, shorten them as much as possible. Only in this way can we ensure that the availability of strategic

raw materials and parts is always a certainty. Deepening free trade with other partners who share our values plays a key role in this. The more quality free trade agreements we have, the more we can diversify our trade links and supply chains. The digitisation and automation of European industry will be important, and it must once again be a leader in innovation, development and, above all, the use of new technologies.

Food security is also part of the strategic resilience of the European economy. The Common Agricultural Policy has made the EU food self-sufficient. However, the war in Ukraine is also having an impact in this area and the EU must respond. At the same time, we must not forget the need to ensure sufficient food supplies in other parts of the world, especially the most vulnerable regions, an not only because destabilisation in these regions would represent a significant security threat for Europe.

Ronald Reagan once said that freedom is never more than a generation away from its demise. I add that the same can be said of democracy. That is why the resilience of democratic institutions to both external and internal threats is crucial. Which is our fifth and final priority. Europe's long-term prosperity and stability is based on functioning democratic mechanisms. Our societies are constantly under attack from those who resent our values. Who resent freedom and democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. We, on the contrary, must defend these values. We will therefore vigorously support the respect and strengthening of freedoms, human rights and European values. We will also strengthen civil society, independent media and independent institutions, across the whole of the European continent.

Ladies and gentlemen, there is no doubt that we are faced with difficult times, and not only in terms of the crisis caused by Russian aggression in Ukraine. We are dealing with high inflation and ever-increasing energy prices. In some of our countries, there is the threat of rising unemployment, and even the possibility of a fall in GDP in some countries. Therefore, we must not forget those citizens for whom this will have a profound social impact. We must not forget the poor and needy. I can assure you that we will systematically address these issues as part of our Presidency.

Ladies and gentlemen, the six-month presidency is indeed a short time. However, I can assure you that the Czech Presidency is ready to play its role actively. We are ready to focus on an open dialogue, to seek compromises and functional solutions in cooperation with other EU institutions. I believe that we will be able to deliver on our promises. I hope that with our help Ukraine will soon be on the way to full recovery. I also hope that we will be successful in the fight against inflation, in ensuring energy security, and employment and increasing the competitiveness of our economies. I trust that we will be even stronger than we are now.

CZECHIA

Ladies and gentlemen, I'm convinced that we can count on the help of the European Parliament, which is a pillar of European democracy. We highly value democratic debates on its floor.

I am looking forward for the debate. Thank you for your attention.

ESTONIA

Kaja Kallas, Prime Minister
Speech at Riigikogu (Parliament of Estonia)
on the implementation of the EU policy
22.11.2022

Dear members of the Riigikogu, dear Vice-Chairman, Ambassadors, Ladies and Gentlemen,

The 24th of February of this year will forever unite the aspirations of the Estonian and Ukrainian people for freedom and independence. The anniversary is also the darkest hour of our generation, when not only the Ukrainian War of Independence began, but we saw the beginning of the full-scale war for a rule-based world order and for Europe. For us, this dangerous flailing of a fading empire is part of history that is trying to keep going. What we are actually seeing is the final act of the disintegration of the Soviet Union. Vladimir Putin has described the disintegration of the Soviet Union as the greatest geopolitical catastrophe. If so, with his attack on Ukraine, Putin will bring this so-called catastrophe to fruition. And not for Ukraine, not for Europe, but for Russia itself. On February 24, Russia signed itself out of the civilized world.

Before February, it was naively thought that the era of empires and colonial conquests had remained permanently in Europe's past, and that the era of peace had arrived. It was at this point that Western and Eastern Europe's assessments of Russia diverged before the war. Not anymore, it has now been realised that Russia is the most serious threat to peace and to our existence. Russia's aggression and massive war crimes against the Ukrainian people have triggered a number of issues that the Russian leadership did not take into account before 24 February. Russia has lost their friends and respect in the eyes of the world. Russia will never again be a reliable partner in the eyes of the rest of the world. Never again.

Estonia, together with the other allies of the Eastern flank of Europe, has been at the forefront of Ukraine's support and international resistance, both in our statements and with personal examples and steadfastness. We don't know exactly how and when this war will end, but we do know how it won't – it won't end with Russia winning. From now on, as a lesson from the Second World War and from our own experience, the issue of responsibility is also extremely important. Without legal judgment and accountability, there is no hope of a just and lasting peace. Russia must make reparation for the damage caused to Ukraine; war crimes and crimes of aggression must be punished.

We must therefore emphasise even more the importance of the fundamental principles of the international order in countries and organisations that are far from war and do not feel the danger so keenly. The most important thing, however, has been the

courageous resistance and unwavering will of the Ukrainian state and people. The most important task of the entire international community is to maintain this determination.

Dear Riigikogu,

24 February 2022 This attack was the most important turning point of our era for Europe. I honestly admit that I have never felt so European, I have never been so proud of Europe as I am of the reaction and unity that Europe has shown regarding Russia's aggression. The unity and solidarity of the European Union, as well as its leadership, have been key to mobilising the entire Western world against Russia.

Already on 24 February, we decided to sanction the entire elite of the Russian state and impose unprecedented economic sanctions to stop the Russian war machine. At the Versailles Summit in March, we made fundamental decisions to abandon Russian energy and to move more vigorously towards phasing out fossil fuels and to use renewable energy. We also decided together to strengthen European defence and decided, for the first time, to open the European Union's door to Ukraine.

A turning point in the era is also the prospect of European Union membership for Ukraine, Moldova, Georgia, the opening of accession negotiations with North Macedonia and Albania and we hope to see a decision on the status of the candidate country for Bosnia and Herzegovina soon, as well as the accession of Finland and Sweden to NATO and, hopefully, Schengen membership for Romania, Bulgaria and Croatia. Adherence to these promises is now becoming more and more important in time, as the impact and meaning of these decisions grows with each passing day.

None of these decisions would have come about so quickly if it hadn't been for the war. War requires a quick decision, war requires bold and forward-looking decisions. This, too, is an aspect that Putin's Russia did not take into account. Russia wanted to subjugate Ukraine and crush European unity. In return, he got a stronger and more united Europe than ever before. In return he is facing the world that doesn't love Russia. Some are afraid, some take advantage of Russia, but no one thinks well of them.

Dear Riigikogu,

As a result of this war, the world has entered an era where crises are a new normal. It is to be feared that it will take quite a few years before the world can once again enter its regular order. Estonia has been on the right track, assuming that conflicts are comprehensive in nature. The energy crisis and unprecedented inflation, the pressure on borders and migration crises around Europe, the Ukrainian war refugees fleeing the Russian war, the attacks internally and against information and cyberspace, and the support for extremism and instability, as well as the exploitation of other vulnerabilities, are all associated with one reason and one factor - Russian imperialism and the Russian war machine. Unfortunately, however, Russia can only be changed by the Russian

people themselves, and today we have no reason to believe that this could happen in the foreseeable future. I do not know if, and when, the time will come when the Russian people will ask themselves and their leaders: why did we need this war? Does Russia lack land, lack natural resources, or what on earth did they expect to achieve with this aggression? Only the Russians themselves can answer that; we can only be better prepared while they seek the answer and those responsible for this. We have to be prepared, then we'll be also less vulnerable.

That is why many decisions are extraordinary and happen for the first time. For the first time in its history, the European Union has funded military aid through the European Peace Facility, and discussions are already under way on how to proceed. The European Peace Facility has also made a remarkable contribution to compensating for and replacing the military resources allocated. The compensation received by Estonia so far is 150 million. We will soon reach agreement on the first joint instrument on the production and acquisition of ammunition, which I called for to be launched urgently at the Versailles Summit. We expect the European Commission to soon launch a medium-term military capability development initiative to consolidate the European military industry, to develop key capabilities in a unified way and to ensure that additional resources for defence serve common defence as much as possible. In cyber defence, we expect a methodology for evaluating cyber investments, based on which we can set a business continuity target for ICT investments. At the end of the year, for the first time in history, a military training mission within the European Union will start to support the Ukrainian Defence Forces.

The solutions to each subsequent crisis we build on the lessons of previous crises. The crisis mechanism, hardened by the European Union health crisis, has helped both Ukraine and the Member States with all kinds of assistance needs. The first launch of temporary protection enabled a unified and solidarity-based response to the unprecedented influx of war refugees. And although 40,000 war refugees have seriously tested Estonia's absorption capacity, without temporary protection there would already be over 100,000 Ukrainian war refugees in Estonia today. This is real solidarity on the part of the European Union. In addition to military assistance, the European Union has provided EUR 7.2 billion in macro-financial assistance to Ukraine and we are on the point of providing even more by 2023. For the first time in history, we will use our unified lending capacity to provide Ukraine with support for survival but also for essential reconstruction. In addition, the use of frozen assets of the Russian State and oligarchs for the benefit of Ukraine should complement this assistance in order to compensate for the damage caused to Ukraine.

Dear Riigikogu,

Over the past year, Europe has painfully understood that energy is part of security and that energy connections are, on the one hand, a great opportunity for us, but at the same time, through connections, we are vulnerable. This vulnerability particularly affects energy connections with Russia. In the case of Russia, no one can ever be sure if that connection will be used to deliver energy or an ultimatum. The transition in Europe therefore also concerns the transition in energy production, storage and consumption. I have said before in this room that climate policy is, by its very nature, a policy for the rational use of natural resources and energy. Today's price increase is largely due to high energy and food prices, which in turn have been brought about by the war in Russia. The abandonment of Russian fossil fuels has therefore been too slow rather than too fast. Instead of developing renewable energy, betting on cheap Russian energy was wrong and cost us dearly. Fortunately, to date, these gas pipelines have not become the straw that breaks the back of Ukraine and Europe. Europe is ready for the winter, and quite close to the goal agreed in Versailles of completely getting rid of Russian gas.

[...]¹

[...]²

Dear Riigikogu,

2022 has simply not been just another year and Russian aggression has not simply been another incident. This is a turning point and a year after which the world will no longer be what it was nine months ago. Sooner or later, the war will end, but the wounds from this war will remain for a long time. Aggressors who have wanted to subjugate and destroy other nations have been seen in history before. But they've never gone unpunished. Not this time, either.

President Zelenskyy has expressed his readiness for a just peace. Its content is respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine in the sense of the UN Charter, securing Ukraine for the future in order to protect itself, restoring and rebuilding, including the use of Russian assets, and prosecuting Russian crimes committed during the war. The European Union and Estonia will support Ukraine fully and for as long as necessary. We should make sure that if we ever look back on today, we will not only remember the great war that began in 2022, but also the time that brought out the best in us and was our finest hour. We are great and generous when we extend a hand to Ukraine in distress, both over here and over there. We are small and petty when we turn our backs on people in need and seek only self-interest in all relationships. We're not going break, we're not going to give up, we're going make it. Because our way of life, our freedom, our well-being and our security depend on it.

¹ On the implementation of renewable energy.

² On the climate and environment protection.

Dear Riigikogu,

In my speech today, I was only able to touch on some of the most important aspects of government action in the European Union this year. Inevitably, most of our concerns these days are linked in one way or another to war. I assure you and the Estonian people that we will continue to be good allies to our partners and we will not forget our people. We'll get through these difficult times together. We stand by Ukraine and the Ukrainian people in our thoughts and actions.

Finally, I would like to thank my colleagues and allies, as well as the French and Czech Presidencies of the Council of the Union, who have all worked tirelessly and magnificently in this pivotal year of suffering. I thank the Riigikogu for its active work and confidence. I hope that the next speaker on Estonia and the EU will continue on the path of strong Europe and will not have to start rescuing Estonia alone. If Europe is strong, so is Estonia.

Long live Estonia! Long live Europe! Thank you!

FINLAND

Sanna Marin, Prime Minister

Speech at the Suomen eduskunta [Parliament of Finland]

16.05.2022

Mr Speaker,

Yesterday, the Government submitted a Report to Parliament on Finland's Accession to the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. The Report supplements the earlier Government report on changes in the security environment.

The Government presents as its conclusion that the President of the Republic of Finland shall decide, pursuant to section 93, paragraph 1 of the Constitution of Finland, that Finland will apply for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization once it has consulted with Parliament on the matter.

Let us now look at the developments that led us to this conclusion.

Firstly, fundamental changes have taken place in our security environment. At the end of last year, Russia issued a demand to the EU and NATO countries, including Finland, that NATO halt its plans for future expansion. Moreover, had we acquiesced to Russia's demands, we would have significantly weakened not only our sovereignty but also our security. Russia's claim that it is a target of outside threats has no grounds whatsoever. The only country that is threatening Europe's security and openly waging a war of aggression is Russia.

Russia's demands are in direct conflict with the basic principles of European security, which are also the foundation for Finland's foreign and security policy. Accordingly, we adhere to the principle that each country has the right to make its own decisions on foreign and security policy. No other actor can infringe on this right. Russia's demands mean that, in its view, Russia has the right to define a sphere of influence for itself.

On 24 February, Russia launched a war of aggression against Ukraine. Russia's ruthless attack is not only a violation of the basic principles of European security but also of the UN Charter and, more broadly, of international law and human rights.

In the midst of such a fundamental change, it has become necessary for Finland to examine its own security policy choices.

As a NATO member country, Finland would become part of NATO's collective defence and the security guarantees that come with it. If Finland becomes the target of an attack, we will receive aid. And, conversely, if another NATO country is the target of an attack, we will help them.

Finland has already committed to the European Union's mutual assistance and solidarity clause. The European Union is built on a strong belief in solidarity.

FINLAND

That said, the EU is not a defence alliance nor does it aspire to be one. The European Union does not have the structures of a defence alliance nor does it make common defence plans. The majority of the Member States of the European Union have relied on NATO in organising their defence.

Supported by NATO security guarantees, the deterrent effect of Finland's defence would be considerably stronger than it is at present. We would thus strengthen the security of NATO as a whole.

If Parliament endorses the conclusions of the Report, the Government is equipped to make the decisions needed to launch accession talks quickly. The Report describes the five main areas included in the talks: political, legal, resource, information security, defence and military issues.

In the talks, we would express our readiness to commit to the North Atlantic Treaty and key NATO policies. This includes NATO's Strategic Concept in particular. Under it, the core tasks include collective defence, crisis management and cooperative security. The Strategic Concept is currently being restructured.

There are no constitutional obstacles preventing Finland from joining a military alliance. As explained in the Report, we would go through the compatibility of Finland's legislation with NATO obligations. We would be bound by NATO's international conventions. No significant needs to amend legislation are expected to arise in the context of information security. The talks would also entail direct costs arising from NATO membership.

The Report states that Finland already meets NATO's defence policy and military membership criteria. The integration of Finland's defence into NATO's collective defence would be carried out gradually after accession.

To ensure that the common security guarantees, which are the key element of NATO membership, are implemented, Finland must participate in the defence arrangements of Northern Europe and in NATO's collective defence planning. Finland must have the capability to allocate Defence Forces troops to assist other NATO member countries and to receive troops from other NATO member countries in Finland.

However, it is important to emphasise that all activities related to the provision or reception of international assistance are always subject to separate decisions in accordance with Finnish legislation. One of Finland's most important tasks in NATO would be to see to its own defence. In NATO, decisions are taken by consensus.

As described in the Report, Finland's membership in NATO would not entail expanding the national defence obligation set out in the Constitution to cover the collective defence of the entire Alliance. Finnish legislation is primarily built on the notion

of national defence, but legislation has recently been developed to support the provision and reception of international assistance and other international cooperation.

Finland engages in strong security and defence cooperation with Sweden, the United States and the United Kingdom and many other partners that are central to the security of Europe. We cooperate both bilaterally and multilaterally. We have adhered to this policy since Russia's illegal occupation of Crimea, which belongs to Ukraine.

Finland has become a very close partner of NATO. Sweden has also followed the same policy. However, this security and defence cooperation does not involve any kind of security guarantees, nor does it have a real preventive effect or other key elements of collective defence.

Sweden is our closest partner. It is in our interest that Finland and Sweden make their security decisions simultaneously and with a strong mutual understanding. Sweden is finalising its decision today so that it will be able to apply for membership in NATO possibly as early as in the next few days. On behalf of the Government, I would like to express my gratitude to Sweden for the close cooperation we have recently enjoyed.

Comprehensive debate on our security policy choices has taken place here in Parliament, in the Government, within the political parties and together with the President of the Republic.

I believe that I am speaking on behalf of many people in Finland when I say that our shared task is to safeguard Finland's independence and integrity and the opportunity of Finns to live their lives safely and peacefully in all situations.

Promoting the rules-based world order, human rights and peace are the cornerstones of Finland's foreign policy. In this changed security environment, membership in NATO would strengthen Finland's opportunities to advance these objectives as well as Finland's international position. And above all, by joining NATO, Finland would strengthen its own security.

FRANCE

Emmanuel Macron, President

Speech at the conference of French ambassadors

1.09.2022

Ambassadors,
Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

I must say that I am particularly pleased to be here with you for today's Conference of Ambassadors after two years in which the global public health situation stopped us being here. That absence was felt even if, last year, the meeting was held by other means: the atmosphere, the informal discussions and the ways and means of building convergences are not the same. [...]³

I would also like to commend, at the same time as each and every one of you in your posts, the work of the Crisis and Support Centre that accomplished exceptional work in the face of this public health crisis, just as it did, with the help and support of several of you in Afghanistan, too, last summer, and in Ukraine today. Crises have gathered pace in recent years, have been exacerbated, I would even say, but one crisis should not make us forget another, and I would like to start by commending your great dedication during this period.

Despite the pandemic, I have been able to count on you and your dedication throughout the last five years serving our country. Despite sometimes facing unfavourable winds and unexpected events, I think I can say that we have both taken real action and built useful benchmarks for collective action. We have made strengthening European sovereignty a tangible reality. And I would like to stress here strongly: when I spoke at Sorbonne University in September 2017, proposing on your behalf, for all of us, a more united, more sovereign, more democratic Europe, many across Europe said, "What's this French whim, a more sovereign Europe? Strategic autonomy? What does that mean? We will soon come back to the principles under which we have lived so far. The reality will be different. This will remain just words." We have established the framework and I am pleased to say that it has been generalized. It has gradually been adopted by Europe as a whole, including Germany now. And I would like to welcome the speech by Federal Chancellor Scholz in Prague two days ago, which is totally in line with this thought and action. Above all, we have acted together to build a stronger Defence Europe, brick after brick. We have done that multilaterally and bilaterally, with specific agreements with Greece and Croatia, to cite but two. We have strengthened this European Union. We have also structured unprecedented bilateral agreements with Germany and Italy.

³ The passage on the problems of French diplomacy during the pandemic.

FRANCE

And our Europe has moved forward in the face of crises. Faced with the pandemic and thanks to the action of our network, it is our Europe that provided vaccines and thus contributed to protecting people. It is also our Europe that ensured an essential economic recovery through an agreement between Germany and France in May 2020, followed by European agreement in July that year that provided us with an unprecedented investment capacity across the 27 Member States and enabled pooling of common debt for future investments. That too had appeared totally impossible. And, faced with the return of war to our continent, we brought a united, swift and strong response in adopting massive, unprecedented sanctions against Russia two days after the start of the conflict, in maintaining our unity, in banishing the Kremlin's propaganda organs from our democracies and in taking the historic step of granting candidate status to Ukraine and Moldova.

[...]⁴

The second thing I wanted to stress in paying tribute to the work done in recent years is the effective multilateralism that we have defended. It has to be said, five years ago, we had to work with an American power that is normally, and has thankfully once more become, the guarantor of a lot of balances and texts, that had decided to withdraw from most of the agreements it had contributed to building, for which it had worked hard, such as on the climate, with the Paris Agreement, or in the fight against nuclear proliferation, with the JCPOA. And so we were at a time of great fragility of multilateralism. Has everything been settled? Far from it, but I will come to that later. In the face of common challenges, while never losing sight of realities – and this will be one of the key themes of my words before you today – I believe we have collectively sought to preserve effective multilateralism by involving all actors, including governments, NGOs, civil society and companies.

[...]⁵

Throughout this period, we have also fought to protect fundamental rights by defending freedom of opinion and expression and access to reliable information through the Information and Democracy Partnership. We have committed to international justice and the fight against impunity alongside all humanitarian actors and have put this commitment into practice through our tangible support to fighting the war crimes committed on Ukrainian soil by Russia, to cite but one example. And I would like to thank all the humanitarian actors, correspondents and supporters, and volunteers who show great courage, some of whom paid the price with their lives two years ago in Niger.

⁴ On the progress of the key European initiatives and strategies.

⁵ On French activity for the climate, fighting terrorist and hate content online, against inequalities around the world.

We have also ensured that France has remained a balancing power in these times, helping limit disorders and build new partnerships with strong armed forces. And I think the armed forces are key to this strategy. With our strategic review in 2017, and the drafting of a military spending bill for 2019-2024 that has been respected right down to the slightest euro and has enabled us to repair capability shortfalls, we have rebuilt a strategy, I believe, that is better suited to the world's realities and is sure to make France's armed forces the leading European armed forces, to consolidate our nuclear deterrent, and to ensure we keep the role that is ours today, in support of our diplomacy.

[...]⁶

[...]⁷

[...]⁸

All of this, I am saying to benefit France in these unusual times. Allow me, at this point in my speech, to try in all modesty, to describe to you the times we are currently living at a global level. I think that I have said here previously, as have my predecessors, that the times in which we are living are exceptional, and every time this is undeniable. However, I believe that there is a growing amount of evidence regarding our situation this year. And there is something about the times in which we are living that reflect both very far-reaching and long-term trends, but also acceleration due to the multiplication of crises and especially the return of war on European soil. This is not an event that should be isolated from the rest, but has happened as almost a logical consequence, a catalyst of many phenomena at work.

With a reasoning that is undoubtedly very incomplete and partial, but with the intention of building a few bricks, I will attempt to tell you how I see things regarding this issue. First, as I was saying, the times in which we are living have revealed serious trends. The world in which we are living has extraordinary forces, and I do not want to start with disaster scenarios. We are living in a world that for decades has lifted record numbers of our citizens out of poverty – the system in which international trade is organized has made this possible for the past few decades. It has driven innovation and its being distributed in an unprecedented manner. Never has humanity invented a vaccine to deal with a pandemic – in less than a year – and made it accessible to a substantial portion of human beings so quickly, with inequalities we saw at play, but also with action to try to curb them at the earliest opportunity.

We have also seen an unprecedented global interconnection which is a strength – it benefits intelligence, innovation, this distribution – and which provides a universal

⁶ On the European-African cooperation.

⁷ On French role in the UN Security Council and in the international policy of development.

⁸ On personnel, financing and changes in French diplomacy.

conscience to many countries and public opinions. But I will not list here every source of optimism in the world in which we are living, but only note that we have been thrust into a basically paradoxical situation. Never before has the national arena been so connected to the international arena. Never have the problems we need to solve been essentially global and never has the global order been so divided and increasingly so at such a fast pace. That is our main problem.

It is this difficult backdrop that has made the war started by Russia in Ukraine more tragic. Let me explain. There is a growing interdependence of our economies and our public opinions with the rest of the world because of the innovations that I have just mentioned, and which have profoundly changed our societies and our democracies. Our economies are open and interdependent. Our people travel, and therefore our countries are interdependent in every respect and we are connected with the rest of the world. We compare, we know, we are informed. This all makes for huge changes for our countries and the established order. We have experienced this directly with the pandemic that put the entire world on hold and disrupted all the value chains all at once, over the long term, a pandemic that has spread incredibly fast, which is the result of the globalization that we had been experiencing. And as I said, this pandemic over time has broken up the value chains – and I will come back to this point – and has plunged 78 million global citizens into poverty.

[...] ⁹

Similarly, what we previously thought to be a spontaneous adjustment of the world and the “invisible hand”, energy and food, to name just two, are once more deep geopolitical issues, as a consequence of the crises. This was already true to a certain extent, but now it is resolutely and overtly so. It is a complete change to our agenda. This means including for our countries: Europe is experiencing it, in the flesh; some neighbouring countries are worse off than us, as we can rely on the strength of our energy mix and model. But this means that what was assumed to be self-evident is a new source of dependencies.

[...] ¹⁰

[...] ¹¹

[...] ¹²

[...] ¹³

⁹ On the climate crisis.

¹⁰ On the nuclear proliferation and the terrorits treat.

¹¹ On demographic changes in the world.

¹² On social, climat and pandemic impact on the world order.

¹³ On the disruption of the liberal political world order, the assertion of authoritarian powers and competition between the United States and China.

However, there is one thing in this context that is clear: it is the strength of French foreign policy and of our Nation, and I believe it. We have never been aligned behind or the vassals of any global power. We have partners, we have allies, we have converging values with the United States of America which are strong, but we have always kept our independence, and I will come back to that. Today's threat is that everyone is being ordered to choose a side, and this competition structures, deeply fractures and weakens international initiatives. We have seen this competition at work even within the World Health Organization, in the midst of the crisis. All of this to say that – and once again I am presenting only a partial overview – the ability of the international order to take action collectively on consensus that are established and shared by all, despite partial disagreements, has weakened in the past ten years. That is a statement of fact. And at the very time that we need more cooperation, to solve the problems that are also ours and those of the planet's, the capacity to produce action has weakened. Therein lies our challenge.

It is in this context that Russia's war against Ukraine and the return of war to European soil, takes a very particular shape and I believe is a time of deep transformation for us, our continent and the international order. The invasion of Ukraine by Russia is a break away from the past because it directly affects our security in the context I have just mentioned. It violates and undermines the principles upon which we built peace over decades: the territorial integrity of States, their sovereign equality, the United Nations Charter. It makes international crisis resolution even more difficult because of the deep divide in the United Nations Security Council and the deconstruction of the treaties and frameworks of our security architecture. So it compounds what was already underway.

It is also a break from the past because of the nature of this war and the global consequences that it brings and the power of its consequences on energy, food, immigration, global information – we can see it in our opinions. Already this war, for which we are doing our utmost to prevent it from becoming a global war – I will come back to this – is a hybrid, globalized war. It is the first hybrid war in which what had been theorized a few years ago – hybrid warfare – is being used, in the techniques employed by Russia. This started with the intervention in Belarus and the manipulation of migration several months before the war, and the intervention of this hybridity and the levers I just mentioned globalized the conflict. It means we are plunged into a war of narrative and of interpretation, because Russia wants to use the context I just mentioned, and establish a contemporary relativism where, with the undermining of the universalism of our values and the consensus that existed up until now on the principles of the international order, which were already weakened or shaken for some, it invokes rationality, logic, and changes the system of blame, placing it all on NATO, and adopts

and fully legitimizes its own intervention, with an unrelenting rationale. In doing so, Russia adds the finishing touches to an effort underway to weaken, which is extremely dangerous for the international order and the inner workings of our democracies.

And it adds the danger of a deflagration with global impact to the list of existing imbalances. And in essence, it means that these fractures and divides which I mentioned could become completely irreversible. It also creates further profound imbalances. It exacerbates the North-South divide, first because we must look at all the countries which abstained, despite our appeal for each country to decide. In a way, this revealed doubts about a consensus which had perhaps been thought much stronger. It is a reality upon which we must act, which I will discuss in a moment, because over 1.7 billion people around the world are directly impacted by the increased prices of food, energy and many more items in the weeks ahead.

And as a result this war could hasten and in fact is already hastening these divides, but also the global divide, triggered, in a way, by Russia, the destabilizing power which will expedite this division between the United States and China. Because China remains in the shadows, and having structured the abstentionist side, is now seeking to further its deep interests and to effect a readjustment, or in any case a split in the international order which is absolutely not in our interests and which we must prevent. In any event, the forces seeking to achieve this are at work. And the tensions in the Taiwan Strait in recent weeks are lending a certain relentlessness to this agenda.

So it is indeed this reality, in the context which I have just set out, that we must face: a war of annexation on our doorstep, led by a nuclear power, a permanent Member of the Security Council, alongside a hybrid war, deployed globally and the historic deconstruction of the frameworks for regulating globalization and relationships between nations. That sums up the war in Ukraine. And I say this forcefully as it is a drastic change for our country and our diplomacy. The time when we could hope to reap the rewards of peace is over, and I believe for long into the future, because we will have to defend peace and rebuild it. Now is no longer a time when we can enjoy our freedoms without paying a price for it. We must cherish our freedom, our values, but we must defend them, fight for them and accept all the consequences when others are fighting for them on our behalf. This is exactly what is happening today in Ukraine. And the time when the international order defined in the wake of World War II, and then consolidated after the Cold War, was at the heart of international relationships is now gone, and must be rebuilt.

That is the situation and, to my mind, the essence of these times. But as you know, it must not lead to pessimism or hopelessness. The challenge ahead is immense. And so to rebuild, we truly need a combative diplomacy and to try to very clearly define a few principles and objectives to prevent the undermining process which I have described

from continuing so that the war does not spread or speed up the ongoing events and international chaos which I described. That is today's challenge, which is the challenge of France and its diplomacy.

It is a challenge we must meet at a very basic level, but in these complex times I think it is always useful to recall simple things. I would just like to explain what I believe are a few constants and methods to build this diplomacy and to set three main objectives. It will not be an exhaustive list, but I think it will put us on the right track. I want us to keep the constants and the methods in mind, and they are first and foremost respect for the sovereignty of each State and its territorial integrity. I think that this is very important. First because it is currently our best argument against Russia. Sometimes, we, the West, have expressed doubts about these issues in the very name of our values. Sometimes, through our actions, we have given others reason to blame us for this. I want this to be clear: for me, that is a constant. The destiny of a people cannot be changed by replacing them. Coalitions can be built to make them change their leaders, pressure can be applied, useful action can be taken. Over time, mechanisms can legitimately be examined to do this effectively. I believe in regional coalitions, in pressure from multiple stakeholders. Together, we must re-assess our sanctions mechanism based on our current actions and the results we achieve in the months and years ahead. But I must clearly state that the sovereignty of people and the territorial integrity of States are constants.

The second thing in this complex world is that at every step, we must stand by the fact that we still talk to all parties. If diplomacy were the art of speaking to people we agree with, I would not have needed to set out our ambitions for the network as I did earlier, as we would need much fewer embassies and resources. But we must fully accept this and not give in to any form of false morality which would render us powerless. Who would want Turkey to be the only global power, and only NATO member if I may recall, still talking to Russia? And in the future, that the same people who forget to criticize it, can say "It's marvellous, look how strong Turkey is, France is not even able to build peace." Meaning that every day, you end up asking it to stop talking! Yes, the profession of diplomacy is indeed to talk to everybody, including and above all people we disagree with. And so we will continue to do so, but here too, using a simple agenda. We have coalitions, we have allies, we are defending coherence with our allies. That is why, as a NATO Member State, we agreed on sanctions with the other members. And we are not one of the NATO Member States which failed to impose sanctions and will continue trading with Russia. That is all I will say on that issue, but since it took place amid a deafening silence, it is worth recalling. We have alliances, action coalitions. We are coherent, but we must uphold our freedom to act, to hold dialogue for useful action.

And thirdly – and I believe this is one of the strengths of our network, it is inherent within it – I think we will increasingly have to build balanced partnerships on an equal footing. Immense structures with overarching powers attempting to subjugate others no longer work. They are increasingly ineffective. But I will return to the idea of building regional or bilateral partnerships in which balances are very respectfully redefined, with a different agenda. I believe that sport, culture, which I will return to later, and gastronomy, which are known as soft power, are key components in order to act effectively and further supplement our goals.

It is a combination of constants and principles of method. I would like to recall them here so that it is clear to everyone and we can move forward. Then, I would like to set three simple goals, which come under coherent action, because I think that our work in recent years was not orthogonal, quite the contrary, given what is occurring before our eyes.

[...] ¹⁴

Speaking of influence, I also want to talk here about a more defensive lever, and this is a new mission of the past few years which must be central to the network's missions. The world has changed, as I mentioned, and our country is often attacked. It is attacked in public opinions via social media and through misinformation. The African continent is the ideal testing ground for this. So, with everything I have just said, I want us to tackle, as it were, the underlying elements. With a genuine policy of partnership which includes culture, sport and promotion of the diaspora, we will remove, so to speak, what underpins Russia's, China's and Turkey's narrative whereby France is a neo-colonial country which puts its army on their soil. This is what is happening. So the claims we are letting them use must be demolished, as it were.

[...] ¹⁵

We must not choose between energy sovereignty and climate. We must do both at once and it is at European level that we can do that. That is why we will have a very proactive agenda to defend in this area in order to end our energy dependence on Russia, speed up the implementation of our climate ambitions, obviously reduce our use of fossil fuels, diversify our supplies and speed up our transition strategy.

What does this involve? Having a real “energy Europe”, then a real “electricity grid Europe”, which is one of the areas where we agree with Germany. But I also say very strongly that France will have to defend an agenda which does not involve recreating other dependencies. When I hear that hydrogen could be substituted for gas, yes, if we produce hydrogen. But if gas is replaced with hydrogen – certainly a cleaner resource –

¹⁴ On economy, culture, sport and international trade as a tool of French influences.

¹⁵ On using media to promote French interests.

which is produced elsewhere, no! We will be recreating the geopolitical dependencies we are paying the price for now. We have both renewable and nuclear energy and a strategy which will carry it through over time, we have the possibility of producing decarbonized energy – but it must be a European ambition. And so we shall have to be vigilant in Europe to ensure that, in the light of the crisis we are experiencing, no new energy dependencies emerge. And that, for me, is central to France's missions.

[...] ¹⁶

The third tier concerns NATO. I believe we have collectively demonstrated that Defence Europe is not in competition with NATO, is not a replacement, but rather an additional pillar. Within the Alliance, we do not want to be mere vassal states that depend on a single power that has all the capabilities. With a stronger Europe, we can acknowledge that Europe sometimes needs to make its own security choices for its own soil and its own neighbourhood. I am glad we now have a president like President Biden, who shares our values and has put the United States back on the path of progressivism and cooperation with all of us. We paid the price for uncertainty. But can we suspend our collective security on the whim of the American voter? Personally, as someone who had to deal with the fallout, the answer is no. It is wonderful to have a strong, committed ally who is like-minded on many things and is ready to act. It's even better to be able to rally that ally to our side without being dependent upon it. This is what we are trying to establish within NATO. I see it as crucial. In this regard, I am pleased that in recent months Defence Europe has been consolidated, with Denmark's decision to join our common defence policies, and that NATO has been strengthened thanks to Sweden and Finland's sovereign decisions to join the Alliance.

Through these actions, we are strengthening and consolidating our independence. I would like to see this same push for independence at the geopolitical level. Europe is increasingly autonomous and sees itself more and more in geopolitical terms. But there is more to Europe than the EU. You have often heard me say that, if we fail to think of Europe beyond the European Union, then we condemn ourselves, ultimately the EU will be forced into union with wider Europe. We will have to choose between our shared policies, the proximity of States, and Europe's geopolitical coherence. Because of this tension and this reality, a few months ago I proposed the European Political Community, inspired by the confederation projects that France proposed shortly after the fall of the Berlin Wall. Those who took part may correct me if I'm wrong, but those projects most likely did not get anywhere because to some they seemed too much like substitutes for enlargement for some, which they considered they were owed – I have in mind a number of countries that were on the other side of the European wall – and because Russia was

¹⁶ On strengthening policies of asylum and migration and defence capabilities of the EU.

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to be a member from the outset. So you would be right to remind me that Russia was there because it had a leader who honoured it and had taken extraordinary political risks. Which brings me, at this point in my speech, to pay tribute to Mikhail Gorbachev for the historic actions he took during that time.

Nonetheless, on the basis of that experience and our current reality, the European Political Community should first of all hold meetings every six months attended not only by members of the EU, but also by the UK, Norway, Switzerland, the Western Balkans, Ukraine, and so on. Many other members have raised the question of Turkey, and it will be discussed. In any case, France has no veto to wield and hopes for a configuration as wide and inclusive as possible, in which EU institutions are not central to the project nor what structures it. Otherwise we will have reproduced the kinds of partnerships we are already familiar with, in which non-EU member states only come for loans or to join the club eventually. No, we must partner very closely with all these States, in a very intergovernmental manner, to build close strategic convergence on these key issues. We need to work with them on climate change, energy supplies, foreign and security policy, commodities and food security, meeting at least every six months. I can assure you that it will be a radical change, because it is what will allow us to stop the growing influence that, in the Western Balkans region, to take just one example, Russia or Turkey might have because we have insufficient contact at political level. It will also help me to put an end to the grumbles of non-recognition with regard to many of these States and governments. It will help end the assumption of infinite expansion by the EU, which – given everything I’ve just said – needs to be stronger, more sovereign and more autonomous, and must resolve the problems it already has. But we need this geopolitical space.

I was delighted that Federal Chancellor Scholz got behind this idea in his Prague speech. Not only do I welcome his speech, I am also very pleased that, in October, the Czech Prime Minister will host the first meeting of the European Political Community, which I am certain will allow us to build new alliances, to devise other forms of continent-wide political cooperation, and to build the kind of Europe that is formed by both diversity and a shared will. It will give us an opportunity to discuss strategic projects, cultural projects, and many other things.

[...] ¹⁷

That is our first major goal: that of independence, which means we must work for a stronger, more influential, more independent France.

My second goal for our diplomacy is of course to work for peace and stability, to be the “balancing power” – ensuring multiple balances – that I spoke of a few years ago. Not because our role is to replace the UN Secretariat, but because there are certain

¹⁷ On the EU’s position towards the Indo-Pacific.

places where it is in our interest to work for peace and stability. Because it is not in our interest for turmoil to spread; because it would harm our citizens; because it would threaten some of our alliances; and because we have partners and friends who are hurt by such imbalances.

The first place to pursue this goal is of course Ukraine, where Russia is waging its war. I will very clearly enumerate the goals of our diplomatic effort.

The first goal is to help Ukraine in this this conflict that has been foisted on it. To help Ukraine in economic and humanitarian terms, and by delivering weapons that will help it confront the aggression and defend its territory, and to begin work on rebuilding the country right now. This is a simple goal, from a mind-set I made clear from the outset: we are not taking part in the war. We have no wish to take part in the war. We cannot let Russia win this war militarily and conquer territories, which would show defeat of our values and the international order through an aggression.

We want to establish conditions that will enable Ukraine, at a time of its choosing, to either achieve a military victory or a negotiated peace, in terms that would not simply be those it would be forced to accept if we abandoned it to its fate. That is our top goal: helping Ukraine for that purpose, and with that kind of determination. I must say that the assistance provided to Ukraine by the United States, European countries and certain others, along with the courage of its people and the strength of its army, have made the situation very different from what many top experts anticipated a few months ago, and especially – I think I can say this – very different from what Russia anticipated.

The second goal we need is that of maintaining European unity. We must not let Europe be divided in the face of this war. That is a challenge every day, as we do not have the same past experiences with Russia, because we do not have the same histories with Russia in our Europe. When we held the Presidency of the Council of the European Union, I was attentive to this point, but it is a daily challenge for us all. We cannot allow Europe to be divided or to align in a way with the most warlike, which would run the risk of an extension of the conflict and a total closure of lines of communication. Nor can we consider that we could allow certain European States on our eastern flank to carry out actions alone. The European Union is key. And if I may, dividing Europe is one of Russia's war goals. So it is precisely our responsibility to preserve the European Union and its strength in these circumstances.

The third goal is that we need to prepare for a long war. To do so, we obviously need to organize at national and European levels, particularly when it comes to energy, food and many other issues. But clearly, faced with this long war, we need to act in a way that avoids escalation and prepares peace. Avoiding escalation is, in my view, France's role: avoiding any nuclear escalation, or any geographical escalation. So we must do

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everything possible for countries not to get engaged in the conflict carelessly, leading to geographical extension. And we must do everything we can through our diplomacy to stop civil nuclear power, or nuclear threats, leading to a “vertical” escalation, some would say. In this respect, France has, as you know, been very active in the last few months, from the outset, since March when it comes to Chernobyl, and in recent days for civil nuclear power to be “protected”, as it were, from the war, and we are seeking as far as possible, firstly to enable the competent international agency, the IAEA, to conduct its mission and to ensure the safety and security of the plant, and also to underline the sovereignty requirements around this nuclear plant in our framework. Preparing peace means continuing to talk in these circumstances, as I said, to all stakeholders, and so France will continue, as I did a few days ago and will do again after the IAEA mission, to talk to Russia, so as to prepare the terms of peace on each point where France’s role is useful.

That means avoiding escalation at every moment in the conflict and, for example, talking about civil nuclear power. It also means preparing and working on the terms of the peace that will have to be negotiated, but accepting that the time will be determined by the two parties, in accordance with the constants and goals I have given. It is not for France, Europeans, or anyone else to choose on Ukraine’s behalf what peace it wants, or when to negotiate it. But we need to do everything we can to ensure a negotiated peace is possible when the two protagonists sit at the table.

The fourth goal is to try to do everything possible to curb the partitioning of the world that is in train during this war, thus addressing what I have just described. We need to use the diplomatic network to seek and win the support of those who do not necessarily share our choices. We need to be clear: the countries that have openly supported Russia are few, and those countries are not the most respectable. We are in relation with them, but they have clear geopolitical choices, there are no surprises there. The great many countries that chose to abstain during the votes that were called in spring and summer may have reassured some commentators, but when you look at their demography, they represent a sizeable part of the world’s population. That means that that sizeable part of the world’s population does not fully understand what is going on, and in the dialogues we have with many African, Asian, Latin American or Pacific leaders, there is a discourse that says it is a regional war, of which they are suffering the effects without understanding exactly what is happening. Our job is first and foremost to stop a confusion taking root. This is an aggression by Russia, and a violation of the principles of the international order. I can say that there is no African public opinion that could support the violation of borders and popular sovereignty. African public opinions have grown out of decolonization on this point. And if we consider that that can be a

new dogma of the international order, then good luck ensuring peace on the African continent in future. So we need to set down clear foundations again, otherwise we will sit back and allow a form of contemporary relativism to take root on this point. And you will see that we will face more and more upheaval.

So we need to reach out, explain how things came about, the reality of the facts, and why we are there. We are talking to Russia, but we disapprove of and are fighting the roots of this conflict. Secondly, we need to address their fears, difficulties and problems. That is the aim of the FARM initiative we launched, and why, in March, France promoted a food security initiative aimed at supporting food autonomy in many of these countries. We did that with Senegal, and the initiative was endorsed by the European Union and the African Union. Because if we do not show many of these countries that we are addressing the unwanted food consequences every day, they will cut us off eventually. We now need to do the same thing when it comes to fertilizers, which is absolutely crucial to develop agriculture in many of these countries, where there were vulnerabilities and dependencies precisely on Belarus and Russia. Then we need to gradually build coalitions, even imperfect ones, incomplete ones, with several of these countries. I have in mind India and China, South Africa, Ethiopia, Algeria, Senegal and Indonesia, to cite but a few, who may share some of the goals we need to set ourselves for this conflict, and in any case who may stand with us to avoid geographical extension of the conflict in Ukraine or tipping points that may come in the next few months. I think the role of our diplomacy, in this work to win over others, so to speak, above and beyond all those who are already on our side, is to work on a gradual rallying and to do everything possible to avoid a great partition where, ultimately, it would be, as some have put it, “the West against the rest”.

[...]¹⁸

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[...]²⁰

[...]²¹

Long live the Republic, long live France!

Translated by PISM from French.

¹⁸ On France as a ballancing power in Africa and a French-African partnership.

¹⁹ On French policy towards the Middle East.

²⁰ On the international health cooperation, climate and energy transition, digital technologies, space and high seas cooperation as components of the effective multilateralism.

²¹ The final remarks about French potential in the international policy.

Emanuel Macron

Speech at the UN General Assembly

20.09.2022

President of the General Assembly,
Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations,
Heads of State and Government,
Ministers, Ambassadors,

It is an honour for me to speak before this Assembly on behalf of France. At this point in time, I am thinking of those who have fought in my country and everywhere in the world for France to be free. Of those who in the past have considered that the destiny of Europe did not leave them indifferent, whether they come from Africa, Asia, Oceania or America, because a part of their freedom and the future of the world was at stake there. I am thinking of those who wrote our Charter and built the walls of this organization to avert the worst, which occurred twice in the 20th century, bringing untold sorrow to mankind.

Let us not forget this debt. It serves the interests of all our countries and indicates the path to peace. It reminds us that there is no other legitimate centre of power than that where the Nations sovereignly decide together. It tells us that the universality of our organization serves no hegemony nor geopolitical oligarchy. Yet, this legacy, our organization, along with our choices as Nations, are today facing a choice.

We have now one simple choice to make, and that is between war and peace. On 24 February, Russia, a permanent member of the Security Council, fractured our collective security with an act of aggression, invasion and annexation. It deliberately violated the Charter of the United Nations and the principle of the sovereign equality of States. On 16 March, the International Court of Justice stated that Russia's aggression was illegal and ordered Russia to withdraw. Russia decided, with such action, to pave the way for other annexation wars, today in Europe, but perhaps tomorrow in Asia, Africa or Latin America.

We may say what we like. I have heard a number of discussions and a number of people speak. However, of one thing I am certain: right now, as I am speaking to you, there are Russian troops in Ukraine and to my knowledge, there are no Ukrainian troops in Russia. This is an irrefutable fact that we must all accept. The longer this war lasts, the more it threatens peace in Europe and peace in the world. It is leading us towards wider, more permanent conflict, where everyone's sovereignty and security are determined solely by power relations, the size of armies, the solidity of alliances and the intentions of armed groups and militia. Where those who see themselves as strong seek to subjugate those they consider to be weak using all possible means.

What we have been witnessing since 24 February is a return to the age of imperialism and colonies. France refuses to accept this and will determinedly seek peace. In this regard, our position is clear and it is in promoting this position that I have pursued dialogue with Russia – even before war broke out – throughout these past months. And I will continue to do so because that is how we will seek peace together, seeking peace through initiatives taken in the years and months prior to the conflict to avert it.

Seeking peace since 24 February, with the humanitarian, economic and military support that we have provided the Ukrainian people to exercise their right to self-defence and safeguard its freedom, seeking peace through our condemnation of the invasion of a sovereign State, the violation of the principles of our collective security, and war crimes committed by Russia on Ukrainian soil, and through our rejection of impunity. The international justice system should establish the crimes and try the perpetrators.

Seeking peace, lastly, with our will to curb the geographic spread and intensity of the war. It is up to us in this regard to support the efforts of the International Atomic Energy Agency to prevent the war's consequences for nuclear safety and security, as we will do in the future alongside Ukrainians whose sovereignty over their plants is not up for discussion. We managed to have an IAEA mission visit the plant and draw up a report independently. We are working together to prevent the risk of an accident that would have devastating consequences.

All of us here today know that peace can only be restored with an agreement that complies with international law. Negotiations will only be possible if sovereignly, Ukraine wants it and Russia agrees to it in good faith. We all know as well that negotiations will only be successful if Ukraine's sovereignty is respected, its territory liberated, and its security protected. Russia now needs to understand that it cannot impose its will through military means, even by cynically accompanying them with sham referendums in the bombarded and now occupied territories. It is up to the members of the Security Council to state this loud and clear and it is up to members of this Assembly to support us on this path to peace.

From this stand, I call on the United Nations members to take action so that Russia renounces its choice of war, assesses the cost for itself and all of us and ends its aggression. This does not mean taking sides between the East or the West or between the North or South. It is the responsibility of all those who are committed to the Charter and to our most precious good – peace – because even beyond war, there is a risk of dividing the world because of the direct and indirect consequences of the conflict.

I know that here, in this Assembly, many are harbouring a feeling of injustice with regard to the dire energy, food and economic consequences that Russia's war has had. I also know that some countries here have remained neutral in a way with regard to

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this war, but I want to say to you very clearly today: those who would like to imitate the cause of the non-aligned movement by refusing to express themselves clearly are mistaken and bear a historic responsibility. The cause of the non-aligned was a cause for peace. The cause of the non-aligned was a cause for the sovereignty of States and for the territorial integrity of each of them. That is what the cause of the non-aligned was. In spite of themselves or secretly with a certain complicity, those who are silent today further the cause of a new imperialism, of a modern cynicism that breaks up our international order without which peace is not possible.

Russia is working to implant the idea today of a double standard, but the war in Ukraine should not be a conflict anyone feels indifferent about. It is close to Europeans who have chosen to support Ukraine without entering into war with Russia. It is far from many of you, but we have all felt the direct consequences and we all have a role to play to end this war because we are all paying its price. Because of its very foundations, this war launched by Russia flouts the principles at the heart of our organization, and flouts the principles of the only international order possible, the only order that can guarantee peace; in other words, respect for national sovereignty and intangible borders.

In this regard, without confusing causes and consequences, who here can defend the idea that the invasion of Ukraine did not warrant punishment? Who among you could consider that the day on which something similar is done to you by a more powerful neighbour, silence of the region and the world would be the best response? Who can support that? Who can believe that it would suffice for Russia to win this war for us to move on to something else? Nobody. Contemporary imperialism is not European or Western. It takes the form of a territorial invasion backed by a globalized hybrid war that uses energy prices, food security, nuclear safety, access to information and movements of people as weapons to divide and destroy. That is how this war is undermining all of our sovereignties.

Therefore, France will stand with the free peoples of the United Nations to address the consequences of the conflict and all the inequalities that it is exacerbating by challenging bloc geopolitics and exclusive alliances because, beyond the direct consequences of the war, the risk we are now facing is that of a new partitioning of the world. Some would have us believe that there is the West on one side that will defend outmoded values to serve its interests and on the other side, the rest of the world that has suffered so much and seeks to cooperate by supporting the war or by looking the other way. I object to this division for at least two reasons.

The first is by principle, and I just mentioned it. Our organization champions universal values, let us not allow the mistaken idea to take hold that there is something regional or adaptable in the values of the Charter. Our organization has universal values and the division in the face of the war in Ukraine is simple: are you for or against the law of

the strongest and failure to respect the territorial integrity of countries and national sovereignty? Are you for or against impunity? I cannot imagine any international order or lasting peace that is not based on respect for peoples and the principle of responsibility. Therefore, yes, our values are universal and that is why they can never serve a power that violates these principles. And when, in recent years, we have taken liberties with these same values, we were wrong, but that cannot under any circumstances justify trampling on what we collectively built after the Second World War.

When I hear Russia say that it is ready to work on new cooperation, on a new international order, without hegemony, which is great, but based on what principles? Invading a neighbour? Not respecting borders of those I don't like? What order is hegemonic today if not Russia? What is being proposed to us? What is being sold to us? What dream is being sold on the good faith of some of us here today? Nothing that lasts for long. Let us not give into cynicism that is breaking up the order that has built us and that alone has enabled us to maintain international stability because these values – the respect for national sovereignty, the integrity of borders – and I assure you, we were wrong every time we took liberties with them – they are the values that we built after the Second World War, after colonialism. Let us refuse to have history falter under the pretext that today it is other geographic regions that are affected and let us not give in.

The second reason I object to this attempt to partition the world is pragmatic. Behind the emerging divisions, there is an attempt to partition the world that ramps up tension between the United States and China. I believe this is a disastrous mistake for us all because it would not be a new Cold War. Several powers of disorder and imbalance are taking advantage of this period to multiply regional conflicts, return to the path of nuclear proliferation and reduce collective security. I therefore think that we must do everything we can to ensure that this new division does not happen because our challenges are growing in number and urgency and require new cooperation.

[...] ²²

I would also like to announce that France will fund the export of Ukrainian wheat to Somalia in partnership with the World Food Programme. We will do this with solidarity, effectiveness and the requirement of full transparency.

[...] ²³

Thank you very much.

²² The passage on the importance of international solidarity in the fight against natural disasters, famine, pandemic and other social and environmental problems.

²³ The passage about the importance of international solidarity in the fight against natural disasters, famine, pandemic, other social and environmental problems and to build peace and the modern international order..

Emmanuel Macron

Closing speech at GLOBSEC summit in Bratislava

31.05.2023

Since GLOBSEC opened its doors in 2008, many political leaders and officials have spoken at the Bratislava Forum, but not, unless I am mistaken, any French presidents. That was no doubt an anomaly, and it would be even more of an anomaly today, in the context of Russia's war against neighbouring Ukraine, when quite simply the future of our continent is at stake, and in which much is playing out in this region. This is particularly true at the cusp of a month that condenses the scale of our strategic challenges, with the European Political Community Summit in Chişinău tomorrow, then an important European Council meeting for the future of our Union in June, and lastly the NATO Summit in Vilnius. Before these events, I think it is worth explaining my thinking, with great freedom of expression, when it comes to the times Europe is seeing on the geopolitical stage.

Almost 20 years ago, our Union opened its gates to Slovakia and other countries freed from the Soviet grip. That was not merely an enlargement of our Union: it was the return to our family of those from whom we had been separated for too long. I do not believe there is a "Western" Europe and an "Eastern" Europe, an "old" Europe and a "new" Europe. That would mean perpetuating the artificial border imposed for decades by the Soviet Union. There is only one Europe. A single weave of intertwined histories and diversity, but with the will for geographical and geopolitical unity and to build, ultimately, a common narrative. I believe that is what unites us all behind this project, that does not erase our national identities and national projects, but rather enables us to conjugate them in an overarching narrative.

Let us remember the last words of the director of a Hungarian press agency, just minutes before he was crushed by Russian artillery in November 1956: "We will die for Hungary and Europe". The curtain fell across our continent, and it was already the latter's unity that was at stake. It announced decades of forced separation, decades of a "kidnapped West", to borrow the excellent words of Milan Kundera that we can make our own today.

And I would like to add, as I speak to those who are here today, that even after Slovakia and many other countries joined the Union, we did not always hear the voices you brought, calling for recognition of your painful memories and history. Some said to you then that you were missing opportunities to pipe down – but I believe we sometimes missed opportunities to listen. That time is over, and today, those voices must be all our voices.

So my message is simple. In the times we are living in, we must not let the West be kidnapped a second time. We will not let Europe be kidnapped a second time.

The challenges we face are considerable, with war at our borders. The war of aggression against Ukraine is ultimately an extreme manifestation of a challenge to our European unity that has played out in the last 15 years, and a show of fragility. Fifteen years of Russian attempts to overturn the whole European security architecture, to reshape it in its own terms.

We all know the milestones: Vladimir Putin's speech in Munich in 2007, the aggression against Georgia in 2008, that against Ukraine in 2014, and again against Ukraine in 2022, and the rampant transformation of Belarus into a vassal state. Ultimately, what Russia demands, and what it sought to codify in the draft treaties it brandished on the eve of its invasion just over a year ago, is the weakening and neutralization of Ukraine and, ultimately, for a whole part of Europe to be made vulnerable in return for minor and largely unverifiable commitments.

In this context, it is true, we failed to provide a European response, or to organize an architecture to protect ourselves, via the OSCE or the other projects envisaged at the time, against these attacks. As for NATO's response, it was too much or too little: perspectives offered to Ukraine and Georgia, exposing the two countries to Russia's wrath, but which did not protect them, and which came with guarantees that were far too feeble. And we lacked coherence as Europeans. So we provided insufficient guarantees to certain countries at our borders. We did not engage with Russia in security dialogue for ourselves. Ultimately, we delegated this dialogue to NATO, which was probably not the best means to succeed. And at the same time, we did not break free of dependencies on Russia, particularly for energy, and indeed we even continued to increase them. So we must be clear-sighted about ourselves. We were not coherent in our approach.

In coming here, I am aware of the experience many of you had during the Soviet period, and I know why everyone is determined, for good reason, to ensure that does not happen again. That is my commitment too. Every country has the right to choose its alliances, and opting for freedom, democracy and transparency is never a threat to one's neighbours. And as I saw powerfully, with the major G7 partners in Japan a few days ago, the foundation of the Charter of the United Nations remains sovereign equality: it has never been limited sovereignty. And it is in this respect too that what is happening in Ukraine today is not merely a European issue, but an issue for the international order and global peace.

What the war in Ukraine shows is not merely that these attempts to subjugate part of Europe are illegal and unacceptable, but also that, in the harsh light of power balances, they are now unrealistic. In Kyiv, in Kharkiv and in Kherson, whole Russian armies have

retreated, before being squandered in Bakhmut and elsewhere for the slightest of gains. The war is far from over, but I believe I can say today that one thing is clear: Ukraine will not be conquered. And now what was, a little over a year ago, a “special operation”, has led to date to a geopolitical failure and to the accession of Finland and soon, I hope, Sweden, to NATO. And so a closure of Russia’s access to the Baltic, and also heightened distrust among all neighbours, as well as a loss of standing for Russia in the concert of nations due to failure to respect the Charter. The situation on the ground gives Russia no credibility to seek by threat what already no right could justify. There is no place in Europe for imperial fantasies. It is very important to recognize that, and that is a precondition, in my eyes, for any future organization of peace.

How we got here says several things about us. We must remember them as we seek to build the future. The first is the strength of our alliance: from the very first days of the fighting, NATO ensured the security of its borders most effectively. Article V played its full role, and I am convinced it holds Russia at bay, and in this respect we owe gratitude to our American allies, who have provided a major share of material and intelligence support to Ukraine.

In December 2019, I made a severe comment about NATO, highlighting the divisions that, at the time, as you will recall, were present within it between Turkey and several other powers, describing it as “brain dead”. I dare say today that Vladimir Putin has resuscitated it with the worst of shocks.

The second thing that strikes me is the exemplary role of the European Union, too. We have been united, swift and clear and I believe that very few, starting with Russia, expected the European Union to respond in such a way: €67 billion in total, including €14 billion in military aid, sanctions and emergency assistance, as well as taking in millions of refugees. We completely and profoundly reorganized our energy system, which was highly dependent on Russia, in just a few months. And that was a demonstration of unity and strategic clarification. It happened under constraint, and should have been done sooner, but we must be satisfied. I also welcome the adoption of a clear doctrine. Europe has chosen strategic autonomy and European sovereignty. And the Versailles agenda that we defined in March 2022 is ultimately a long way from what people described five years ago as a French whim when I talked of European sovereignty at the Sorbonne. So I believe the second thing that we should take away from recent months, in addition to the strength of the alliance, is the unity and the ideological clarification of our European Union, and its clarity in terms of military, humanitarian and economic support to Ukraine.

France has played its full role in this respect, and I can discuss this further in questions. I will also come back to the subject in the coming weeks and months. However, this collective effort will be for nothing if it is not sustained. Looking forward now, in light of

what I just said, and of analysis of the past and the situation in recent months, I would like to imagine our future.

Moscow must certainly be very tempted to hope that, where its armies have failed, time will help it, perhaps when elections are held or as public opinion fatigues. I think we need to be very clear about what we have to do in the short and medium terms. Today, we need to help Ukraine, by every means, to conduct an effective counter-offensive. That is essential. That is what we are doing, and we need to step up our efforts, as what is at stake in the coming months is the very possibility of chosen and therefore lasting peace.

The second thing is that we need to be very clear about what we call peace. Peace in Ukraine and on our continent cannot mean a ceasefire that enshrines the current situation, re-creating a frozen conflict and, if you will, accepting the seizure of territory in violation of all the principles of international law. Because ultimately, such a frozen conflict would definitely be the war of tomorrow or the day after, and would weaken us all. Only one peace is possible: a peace that respects international law and is chosen by the victims of the aggression: the Ukrainian people. That is a peace that can last and that therefore respects these balances, bolstered by, and I will come back to this, credible guarantees. And so we need to prepare very clear-sightedly for this conflict to last, and for the consequences of the conflict to last. I hope the coming months will enable us, following a victorious counter-offensive, to bring everybody back to the negotiating table and build lasting peace, under the conditions I just set out, chosen by Ukraine and in accordance with international law. But we will have years and years of reconstruction and a humanitarian situation to manage, as we know already.

We must also, to be credible in Russia's eyes, put ourselves in a position, ourselves and our public opinions, to support Ukraine longer-term in a high- and medium-intensity conflict. That means working with all our partners to review and re-analyse this summer the very nature of our support and what is needed to achieve the result I have described.

At the same time, we need to convince the global South, because there is, in the context I have discussed, a fragility that we must be clear about. It is that today, while thanks to the engagement of Japan and a few others, this is not simply a Western war, many emerging powers consider that it is not their war. Even if they recognize that it is an aggression and contrary to the Charter of the United Nations, they barely murmur it, because they consider that their main problems are fighting poverty in their countries, that they are subject to enough constraints already, that there are double standards, that their own security is not addressed, that they are facing the consequences of this war head-on, and that when their own security was threatened, we did not respond with the same vigour. We must heed that message.

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Otherwise, the risk is that all these countries will be seized upon by others to build an alternative international order and become, by choice, clear-sightedly or in fact, by composition, objective allies of Russia's goals in the longer term. And so we must absolutely, as we make efforts to support the preparation of lasting peace, do this work to convince the countries of the South and several emerging countries, and thus re-engage in the assistance that we have a duty to provide them in the clarification of our agenda.

Now that I have said all that, let us look at our future. The question we face is ultimately what future is possible for our Europe, in the long term, and how our Europe can rebuild lasting stability, peace and security for itself. We have responded very well in the short term, thanks to the commitment of States. NATO has shown its credibility on its eastern flank, and the European Union through its efforts. But is that enough in the long term?

Today, we should be pleased to have an American administration that has stood with us, that has made as many efforts as the Europeans, and that very clearly increases our collective credibility. We should be grateful and thankful to the United States of America. Will that administration always be the same? Nobody can tell, and we cannot delegate our collective security and our stability to the choices of American voters in the coming years. At the same time, the Americans have been asking us for years, each successive administration, to better share the burden and to make greater efforts for our security and our neighbourhood. And so yes, a Europe of Defence, a European pillar within NATO, is essential. That is the only way to be credible for ourselves, to be credible in the long term, to reduce our dependency and to shoulder our legitimate share of the burden. Because, whether we like it or not, our geography will not change. We will live in the same place, and Russia will remain Russia, with the same borders and the same geography. We need to build a space that, tomorrow, must be this space of lasting peace, because the rights of the Ukrainian people will have been respected and international law will have been restored. That space must allow us to cohabit as peacefully as possible with the Russia as possible – but with no naivety.

I repeat, this project is not one of naivety with regard to Russia – I have never had such naivety – but it is about not denying geography and not considering that we should make our choices as if there was an ocean between Russia and us. And my goal is in no case to try to replace NATO with something else. I want to debunk all these ideas here because I know how they can be repeated and distorted. I do not want to replace NATO with a sort of Franco-German condominium. No.

I believe that it is a broad, powerful Europe, with countries like yours, like Poland and many others, that need to play their role in this Europe of Defence, a Europe that

increasingly ensures its own security and addresses its own neighbourhood issues. To do so, we now, urgently, need to speed up our strategic choices and the implementation of what we have started to decide. And that agenda is part of what we must build for this common destiny.

Firstly, we need to forge a more sovereign European capacity when it comes to energy, technology and military capabilities. That is part of the Versailles agenda we launched in March 2022. We now need to swiftly, and very tangibly, implement that agenda: meaning we should increasingly build in Europe, buy in Europe and innovate in Europe. When it comes to military capabilities, that also requires a national effort that we have to make. France did not wait for this war. We stepped up our efforts with the military programming act in my first term and we are currently increasing it by €100 billion compared to the previous period, to reach a total of €413 billion under the current programming act. Alongside the goal of reaching 2% of GDP, we also need to achieve tangible goals, with deployments and real capabilities to ensure the credibility of this collective effort, as France did a few days after Russia's aggression against Ukraine by deploying forces to Romania. Less than eight days later, we had hundreds of soldiers in Romania. This is about the credibility of a Europe of Defence within NATO. But a sovereign choice is needed, with capabilities, expenditure and deployment mechanisms.

This strategic autonomy and military sovereignty also requires an industrial effort. We have clearly understood, in recent months, in emptying our arsenals, that we have only possessed with certainty what we manufactured. We must learn lessons from this and are acting accordingly. And when I see certain countries increase their defence spending to massively buy non-European, I simply say: "you are creating yourselves problems for the future". We need to use this opportunity to produce more in Europe. We have been inventive together, producing something new concerning munitions, with spectacular progress in support of Ukraine. We need to go much further. We need to harmonize our European standards, because there is too much competition between us. There are far more different standards between Europeans than there are within the United States of America. But in doing so, we must develop a genuinely European defence technological and industrial base in all interested countries, and deploy totally sovereign equipment at European level. We need to reduce our dependence and we need to continue building strategic proximity in this collective effort. I have in mind, of course, the European Intervention Initiative we launched five years ago, and that is still completely relevant today.

Several of you accompanied us in fighting terrorism in Africa, showing that solidarity is two-way, and for that we are grateful. Even if the French presence in Africa is changing, the need to continue to be engaged together remains. And therefore we need to explore

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possibilities for cooperation in all these spaces and build capacity among Europeans by building on NATO's interoperability, yet going beyond that, knowing how to engage together common action forces in new theatres of operation in your neighbourhoods, but also in cyber space, in space, in maritime areas etc.

More broadly, as you can see, this first pillar is, ultimately, to shore up our military sovereignty. This means that we must take a look at the situation in which we live. It is up to us, as Europeans, in the future, to have our own capacity to defend ourselves and to manage our neighbourhoods. And in this regard, let's not only focus on capabilities to manage past or current wars or to manage conflicts that are simply those that are emerging today. Managing our neighbourhood does not concern our Eastern Flank alone. It also concerns the Mediterranean, the Eastern Mediterranean and Southern Mediterranean regions, and new spaces of conflict including cyber space, space and maritime areas. They are at least as important as land wars on our continent that we have seen re-emerge because of Russian aggression and that we thought were disappearing, but that do not dispel the new forms of conflict that will grow in number. Therefore, let us have this strategic lucidity to prepare future conflicts that are bound to happen.

In addition to this focus on sovereignty that is therefore European, technological and military, our second challenge is to see to it that Europe becomes a fully fledged player, instead of being subjected to strategic evolutions in its environment. In these last few years, I have been struck by the fact that we Europeans have not changed our status of geopolitical minority. It's very hard for a French President to say this so bluntly. This generates irritation and annoyance. But I had the experience of going to a NATO summit with another US administration that liked us less, and who, with hardly any notice and in coordinating things with Europeans in a very bureaucratic way, informed us that it was withdrawing from the INF Treaty saying that "the Russians are no longer complying with it."

In 2019, we Europeans discovered a treaty that covered us against missiles that landed on our soil, and that Russian non-compliance and the US decision could leave us exposed because we were not a party to it. The same thing happened when Russia methodically suspended implementation of the New Start Treaty last February, then clearly violated the NATO-Russia Founding Act in March, etc.

I say this very clearly, we Europeans must be active players of these treaties that cover our security and build the future framework. If we delegate our role to others, Russia, the United States or I don't know who, we will never be credible players. And therefore, yes, we must build these diplomatic solutions for the future.

To do so, we must first fully control arms, which refers back to what I was saying about our industrial lucidity. Europe was absent from treaties such as the Intermediate-

Range Nuclear Forces Treaty and the New Start Treaty, despite the fact that its security was at stake. Therefore, it must have influence. And it will have much more credibility if it is a player, and not a spectator, in these balances. That is why I called on Europeans to acquire a deep-strike capability, which will bolster our security, and also give us a card to play in all future negotiations. I wish to launch discussions with the European partners that are interested in exploring cooperation in this area.

The second, which is related, is air-defence. The war in Ukraine has shown its vital importance. It's a strategic issue before being an issue of industrial capability, but very clearly, it must build on a balance of offensive and defensive actions. It should clearly take nuclear deterrence into account. That is why, as I pledged in Munich, a conference will be held on this issue on 19 June in Paris. I invite all defence ministers of the European countries represented here today to attend. It will give us an opportunity to pursue our work.

The third, more broadly, is the way in which Europe can secure its environment. We must build these new treaties as fully fledged players around the table. And in doing so, let us be very clear, the issue of security with our neighbours will be raised. We will undoubtedly discuss this again in the questions portion. But securing our environment is a key component of this credibility and a Europe with a full role. We should provide Ukraine with solid security guarantees to put an end to repeated destabilizing action. If Russia wants to continue destabilizing Europe, it must be ready to pay the geopolitical price. I have listened to all of our debates, but we would be strange geopolitical players if we were to say "we are massively arming Ukraine, but we do not want to include it in any strategic security debates."

I was reading something Henry Kissinger said recently, who we all know is a very experienced diplomat. He was right when he said: in a year, all those who, with good reason, have helped Ukraine, have made it such a powerful player that it would be best to bring it back into these existing security architectures. And I tend to share this vision. Therefore, if we want credible lasting peace, if we want to have influence with respect to Russia, and if we want to be credible vis-à-vis Ukrainians, we must give Ukraine the means to prevent any additional aggression and we must include Ukraine, in a structure, in a credible security architecture, including for ourselves.

That is why I am in favour – and this will be the subject of collective discussions in the coming weeks ahead of the Vilnius Summit – of providing tangible security guarantees to Ukraine, for two reasons: Ukraine today is protecting Europe and provides security guarantees to Europe.

The second reason is that Ukraine is now armed to such a point that it is in our interest for it to have credible security guarantees with us in a multilateral framework,

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with multilateral support or bilateral support. This is what we will discuss. We must today be much more ambitious than we sometimes are in discussions on this topic.

Over the medium term, it is clearly our Europe's stability and security that we will need to build on the basis of this solid peace in Ukraine, of these security guarantees in our neighbourhood – and tomorrow the question of Belarus and others will be raised – and of a transparent framework of trust making it possible to avoid the escalation of capabilities in the future to exit, at some point, this state of war when peace will be negotiated and stable. Yet we have armed our Eastern Flank so much and Russia has deployed so many arms that we will have to rebuild. I am talking here about the medium term, a framework for de-escalation. But it will be up to Europeans at that time to really build it in a transparent framework in which we must be players of these treaties around the table in order to negotiate, and around the table in order to determine their effective compliance and their evolution, as opposed to what has been done in the past.

That is why, within this framework, we must also think in terms of a broader Europe, and I will end my remarks with these points. This Europe is one that I wanted to propose just over a year ago in Strasbourg, that of a European Political Community. Why? Because we need to consider our Europe, not only from a security standpoint, within the framework of NATO and not simply within the framework of the European Union.

That is why the European Political Community does not compete with NATO, nor does it take the place of enlargement. It is a framework for strategic discussion needed by all countries to build, I hope, an innovative and fresh institutional architecture, regarding energy and interconnection, mobility, security and strategy, and coming up with common solutions without waiting for enlargement to be completed and without merely taking a NATO-based approach. We will pursue this at Chişinău and we will express our willingness to go as far as possible in this format where cool-headed discussion can be held and topics of common interest can emerge.

Among other topics, I will have an opportunity to propose the extension of the European Cyber Reserve to include all EPC countries because it is in our interest to be inclusive in order to safeguard our security. In this regard, the European Political Community is a geopolitical think tank, if you will, and we need to continue down this path.

But as I have said, it does not replace enlargement. For us, the question is not whether we should enlarge – we answered that question a year ago – nor when we should enlarge – for me, as swiftly as possible – but rather how we should do it. Several of you may remember that France advocated a change in the enlargement method in 2018. However, ultimately the war in Ukraine and today's worsening situation in several

areas of the Western Balkans have shown us one thing, which is that our current method is not working.

Yet I believe there are two mistakes we should avoid making. The first is to tell ourselves that the situation is worsening, stay as we are, and give hope to Western Balkans, Ukraine and Moldova, and wait and see what happens. We are very familiar with this tactic, we've been using it for a long time. If we do this, I think that we would actually give more space to those who want to destabilize Europe within Europe and I think that we would wake up in a few years to a situation that is considerably worse.

A second mistake would be to say "let's enlarge, it's our duty and in our geopolitical interest, I think we need to anchor Moldova, Ukraine and the Western Balkans to our Europe. Let's do it. We'll reform later". This would also be disastrous because it would create a powerless Europe, made from at times slow and cumbersome administrative procedures and especially with huge differences.

You can clearly see that in Europe there are ultimately two deep forces. They are mutually respectful. One that says: we need more geopolitical unity, to anchor the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine to this Europe. It needs to be united. It needs to think of itself in this space in terms of security, geopolitics, energy and migration. In the other direction, we had a small idea, but we need to coordinate economic policies to a greater extent, have more requirements regarding the rule of law and it creates a somewhat central role that some States do not always accept. We need to think about this paradox, which is that our European Union was not designed to be enlarged at will. It was designed to always be deepened and to move towards a more integrated project.

We need – due to the times in which we are living and the fact that everything is happening at the same time to a certain extent – but that's how it goes – a very great moment of theoretical and geopolitical clarification of our European Union. Yes, it should be enlarged. Yes, it should be rethought very extensively with regard to its governance and its aims. Yes, it should innovate, undoubtedly to invent several formats and clarify each of their aims. It is the only way to meet the legitimate expectation of the Western Balkans, Moldova and Ukraine, which should become part of the European Union, and to maintain geopolitical effectiveness, but also with regard to the climate, rule of law, and the economic integration the EU is now experiencing.

And therefore, we need to re-coordinate and rethink the intergovernmental couple and Community policy and also understand what happens in Member States when they no longer understand Europe and the path that it is taking now and for the time being. And we will be working on this with several of our partners in the coming weeks.

I have already spoken too long. Please accept my apologies. These were the points I wanted to discuss. And therefore, as you have understood, our ability to build a just

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and lasting peace in Ukraine without any weakness is at stake, along with the future of our continent. I truly believe this will happen in the months and the two or three years ahead. Not much more.

I believe Europe has experienced a conceptual and strategic awakening. But it must learn all the possible lessons from the past for itself and its neighbourhood. In this connection, I think you've understood that is why I'm here. You can count on France. It is sometimes seen as being arrogant or far away from or not interested in this part of Europe.

As for me, I visited every EU Member State during my first term of office. Every one, because I considered that the European Union is not just Brussels, but all the capitals. It is this constantly plural dialogue and the absence of hegemony. But you can count on France over the long term. I also know that France can count on you so that we can together build a Europe that is stronger, more sovereign and more capable of ensuring its own security. And this cannot be done with just one, two or three countries. We will do it with all 27 and even more, by including in this strategic debate all those who will join us tomorrow in Chişinău, in this capacity to have frank, open, far-reaching, powerful, ambitious dialogue, by accepting our differences, respecting them and clearly setting out our aims. Ultimately, let us recognize together that our Europe must be a great democratic, diverse, but united power.

Thank you very much.

Emmanuel Macron

Press conference after signing the French-Ukrainian security agreement in Paris

16.02.2024

Mr President,
dear Volodymyr,
Ministers,
Ambassadors,
Ladies and Gentlemen, in your great capacity.

I am delighted, dear Volodymyr, to welcome you back to Paris today. This is the third time since the start of the conflict and the Russian aggression against your country. That's many times, because I haven't forgotten your first visit here. At the time, you were a candidate between the two rounds in Ukraine, and it was the first time we had seen each other. In welcoming you today, it is through you, to all the Ukrainian people, that we wish first of all to express our admiration and above all our determination to continue to support Ukraine over the long term. This determination is as strong as it was on the first day, and I want to tell you that our commitment to your side will not waver. This is also the meaning of the bilateral security agreement that we have just signed. It gives concrete form to a commitment we made with all the G7 countries at the NATO summit in Vilnius last July. Not only does it give us long-term support, but it is also part of a collective approach and rationale, since the United Kingdom and Germany have already signed a similar agreement, and all the other G7 countries and 25 other countries will eventually do likewise. As, in a few days' time, we enter the third year of this war that only Russia wanted, I cannot forget, dear Volodymyr, our discussions in the early hours of that fateful day on 24 February 2022.

I would like to spare a thought for all Ukrainians, for all those who have been torn from their homes and families by the war, for those fighting at the front in Avdiivka in particular and elsewhere. Ukrainians today are fighting not only for their freedom, but for European security, for the solidity of liberal democracies and the defence of international law.

Dear Volodymyr, we are determined to stand by your side and defeat Russia's war of aggression. The courage of the Ukrainian resistance and the surge of unity that your just struggle has inspired have already led to a series of strategic defeats by Russia. Two years ago, Russia told us it was conducting a special operation that would be completed in a matter of weeks. Now it has been reduced to emptying its prisons to replace the colossal losses it is suffering at the front. We were told that Russia had a certain future. Many young Russians preferred freedom to war and now find themselves in Belgrade, Tbilisi,

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Istanbul or Paris. Russia has lost its talents. It would rather finance a pointless, unjust and cruel war than provide basic services for its own population or subsidise the price of eggs for low-wage earners. Since the 90s, Russia had returned to the international arena. It has now lost this position and its credibility on the international stage. It has been lost because it is no longer invited. It has lost its credibility because Ukraine will be joining the European Union and, I hope, NATO too. It has lost out strategically, for whom access to the seas is so decisive. By pushing Finland and Sweden to join NATO and, in so doing, making the Baltic Sea a sea where the Allies now have a predominant place, it has lost out strategically, because it is putting its free spirits in the Gulag, condemning them to death, like Mr Navalny, whose memory and commitment I salute. My thoughts this evening are with his wife and family. He belies the decline in courage against which Solzhenitsyn so rightly warned us. Yes, Mr Navalny's death shows the weakness of the Kremlin and the fear of any opponent. The facts are stubborn, but we must always remember them. Ukraine is the victim, and Russia is the aggressor.

And while this aggression is aimed primarily at Ukraine, it has many other victims: international law and order, world stability, and the entire planet because of the imbalances that this aggression has created, particularly in terms of food. Despite its setbacks, Russia has embarked on a headlong rush over the last two years and, particularly in recent months, has stepped up its aggressive stance, not just against Ukraine, but against all of us. Today, a new phase is beginning. Vladimir Putin's Russia has become a methodical actor in the destabilisation of the world, which does not hesitate to threaten its environment, but also, more directly, our interests. Russia has become an imperialist power that denies Ukraine's sovereignty, its right and its ability to make its own choices, to choose its own alliances, in short, to exist. And what Russia really wants is an order based on force. What Ukraine is defending, and what we are defending with it, is respect for the fundamental principles of international law. Russia has increasingly become a revisionist power in recent years. Recent comments show that its appetite for rewriting history knows no bounds. It is not just the countries it has recently invaded, such as Ukraine and Georgia, that have cause for concern.

Russia is currently building, or should I say the Kremlin regime, because I don't want to commit an entire people to this, but simply a few decision-makers who have decided to change the destiny of their own nation for the worse. The Kremlin regime is currently constructing a fantasised narrative to call into question the borders inherited from the Soviet Union by reneging on its own word and its own commitments, in particular those made at Alma-Ata in 1991, which is a threat to Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. It must be aware that the world is watching, that everyone has the right to wonder which new truncated and falsified piece of history it will invoke to pursue its agenda, which

new country will be its prey, which other country, tomorrow, will be tempted to imitate it.

Russia has also been interfering in elections in recent years. I have not forgotten that during the 2016-2017 election campaign, I came under very direct attack from Russia. I had the opportunity to explain this during our first meeting with Vladimir Putin. In recent months, all over Europe, these manoeuvres to disinform and manipulate information, as well as cyber-attacks, have multiplied, systematised and intensified. In fact, Russia has crossed several thresholds in this respect with regard to European democracies in recent weeks and months. This is what led us, along with Germany and Poland, to reveal and attribute several of these attacks, and we will continue to do the same. This change of stance is a very clear sign of a desire for aggression us towards us.

Finally, Russia has also increased the number of areas of confrontation and destabilisation in Africa and the Near and Middle East. I remain cautious here, but the concerns expressed by some in recent days about Russia's possible deployment of nuclear weapons in space only adds to this picture. These facts, if confirmed, would be so serious, so illegal, so destabilising for the world and so worrying for its citizens that Russia must give explanations without delay. The international institutions must clearly take up the issue.

All this clearly shows that while in recent years Russia has had a form of continuity on several of these points - imperialism, revision of history, destabilisation of our democracies - the intensification of these aggressions, the change in nature and the thresholds crossed mean that it is now time to say it: this change in Russia's posture requires a collective response.

A clear message from Europe that we will not let this happen, but also a very clear signal from the international community. Because these attacks affect the stability of the entire planet and concern all the countries that have eminent diplomatic responsibilities.

Let's be clear: France is not at war with Russia or the Russian people. Indeed, France did everything in its power to prevent war in Ukraine. But we are determined to defeat Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and any other aggression that Russia may be guilty of. If Russia thinks it can weaken our resolve, bank on this or that election or on our weariness, then it is mistaken.

Before you, dear Volodymyr, I would like to reiterate that France will continue to support Ukraine over the long term. As I said at the beginning of my speech, this is the meaning of the agreement we have signed for a period of 10 years, which will remain valid until Ukraine joins NATO.

As part of this agreement, France has pledged to provide up to €3 billion in additional military aid for Ukraine in 2024, after the €1.7 billion in 2022 and €2.1 billion in 2023. The

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aim of this aid is to continue to provide Ukraine with the means to defend its sovereignty and territorial integrity over the long term. France is also committed to continuing its support for Ukraine on all fronts: supply of military equipment, cooperation between defence industries with the development of co-productions, training, intelligence, civilian aid, etc. By helping our Ukrainian partners to defend themselves, we are investing in Europe's security and in the strengthening of the European industrial, technological and defence base.

All this already represents a great deal, but we are determined to do even more, including shaking up our habits and the comfort of certainties. In particular, I want France and the European Union to continue to adapt to the new context in which we find ourselves. This will require a determined effort to rearm in terms of doctrine and resources. This is a new test for the European Union.

But the outcome of Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine will be decisive for our interests, our values, our security and our model of society. As early as the Versailles summit in March 2022, convened under the French Presidency of the European Union, we demonstrated our ability, together, to change the paradigm. Helping Ukraine to defend its sovereignty goes hand in hand with our own sovereignty and strategic autonomy. Our endurance and determination will continue to be tested, but we will find the energy and resources to continue transforming ourselves.

This is also why I want to reiterate my support for the proposal by the Estonian Prime Minister, Kaja Kallas, to issue the necessary long-term funding to support Ukraine and mobilise our European industrial base. Yes, Europe must invest more, on a different scale and over the long term.

That is what I wanted to say today, Mr President, dear Volodymyr, our determined support right to the end, our determination at your side to make things happen and the conviction that, not only in doing so, are we defending Ukraine, but we are also defending what binds us together on the same continent in the service of the same values. You will find France at your side today and tomorrow, and I want to thank you once again for being in Paris today with our support for today, tomorrow and for as long as necessary. Thank you very much.

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Olaf Scholz, Chancellor

Policy statement to the Bundestag

27.02.2022

Madam President,
Distinguished colleagues,
Fellow citizens,

The twenty-fourth of February 2022 marks a watershed in the history of our continent. With the attack on Ukraine, the Russian President Putin has started a war of aggression in cold blood. For one reason alone: the freedom of the Ukrainian people calls his own oppressive regime into question. That is inhumane. It is a violation of international law. There is nothing and nobody that can justify it. The terrible images from Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa and Mariupol show Putin's utter lack of scruples. The appalling injustice, the pain of the Ukrainian people – they affect us all very deeply. I know exactly what issues many people across the country have been discussing at their dinner tables in recent days. What concerns are weighing on them – in light of the terrible news from the war zones.

Many of us still remember our parents' or grandparents' tales of war. And for younger people it is almost inconceivable – war in Europe. Many of them are giving voice to their horror – across the country, including just outside in front of the Reichstag. We are living through a watershed era. And that means that the world afterwards will no longer be the same as the world before. The issue at the heart of this is whether power is allowed to prevail over the law. Whether we permit Putin to turn back the clock to the nineteenth century and the age of the great powers. Or whether we have it in us to keep warmongers like Putin in check. That requires strength of our own. Yes, we fully intend to secure our freedom, our democracy and our prosperity. And I am very grateful to you, Madam President, for allowing me to use today's special session to share with you what the Federal Government has in mind. I also thank the heads of all democratic parliamentary groups in this House for supporting this session.

Ladies and gentlemen,

With the attack on Ukraine, Putin is not just seeking to wipe an independent country off the map. He is demolishing the European security order that had prevailed for almost half a century since the Helsinki Final Act. He is also isolating himself from the entire international community. Our embassies around the world have worked with France in recent days to advocate for the United Nations Security Council to call this Russian aggression what it is: a flagrant breach of international law. And they have done so quite successfully, considering the result of the Security Council session in New York. The consultations showed that we are by no means alone in our commitment to peace. We

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will continue to uphold it, with all of our might. I am very grateful to Foreign Minister Baerbock for what she has achieved in this regard. It was only by resorting to the use of its veto that Moscow – which is, after all, a permanent member of the Security Council – was able to prevent itself from being censured.

What a disgrace!

President Putin always talks about indivisible security. But what he really seeks now is to divide the continent into the familiar old spheres of influence through armed force. This has consequences for security in Europe. Yes, in the long term security in Europe cannot be achieved in opposition to Russia. But for the foreseeable future, Putin is jeopardising this security. That is why I say very clearly that we accept the challenge that now faces us – with clear-headed resolve.

There are five courses of action that we must take:

Firstly, we must support Ukraine in this desperate situation. We have already provided significant support in recent weeks, months and years. But with the attack on Ukraine, we have entered a new era. In Kyiv, Kharkiv, Odesa and Mariupol, people are not just defending their homeland. They are fighting for freedom and their democracy. For values that we share with them. As democrats, as Europeans, we stand by their side – on the right side of history! With his attack on Ukraine on Thursday, President Putin has created a new reality. This new reality requires an unequivocal response. We have given one. As you know, we decided yesterday that Germany will supply Ukraine with weapons for the country's defence. No other response to Putin's aggression was possible.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The second course of action that we must take is to divert Putin from the path of war. This war is a catastrophe for Ukraine. However, it will prove to be a catastrophe for Russia, too. Together with the Heads of State and Government of the EU, we have passed a package of sanctions on an unprecedented scale. We are cutting Russian banks and state businesses off from financing. We are preventing the export of cutting-edge technology to Russia. And we are targeting the oligarchs and their investments in the EU. In addition to this, there are the punitive measures against Putin and individuals close to him as well as restrictions on the granting of visas to Russian officials. And we are excluding major Russian banks from the banking communication network Swift. We reached an agreement on this yesterday with the Heads of State and Government of the democracies with the strongest economies and of the EU. We must not be under any illusions – Putin will not change course overnight.

But the Russian leadership will very soon see what a high price it will pay. In the last week alone, Russian stocks lost over thirty percent of their value. This shows that our sanctions are working. And we have not ruled out further sanctions – nothing is off the table. Our guiding principle remains the question of what will have the greatest

impact on those responsible. The individuals this is about. And not the Russian people. Because Putin, not the Russian people, has decided to start this war. And so it must be clearly stated that this war is Putin's war! It is important to me to specify this. Because reconciliation between Germans and Russians after the Second World War is – and remains – an important chapter of our shared history. And I know how difficult it is for the many people in our country who were born in Ukraine or Russia to bear the current situation. We will not, therefore, allow this conflict between Putin and the free world to lead to the reopening of old wounds and to new outbreaks of hostility. And there is something else that we should not forget – in many Russian cities in recent days, ordinary people have protested against Putin's war, have run the risk of being arrested and punished. That requires great courage and true bravery!

Today, Germany stands with the Ukrainian people. Our thoughts and our sympathy go out today to the victims of the Russian war of aggression. And, equally, we stand with all those in Russia who are boldly defying Putin's regime and opposing his war against Ukraine. We know that there are many of them. My message to them all is: Don't give up! I am quite sure that freedom, tolerance and human rights will prevail in Russia, too.

Ladies and gentlemen,

The third major challenge lies in preventing Putin's war from spilling over into other countries in Europe. That means that we will stand unconditionally by our collective defence obligation within NATO. I have said the same to our allies in Central and Eastern Europe who are worried about their security. President Putin should not underestimate our resolve to defend every square metre of NATO territory together with our allies! We are absolutely serious about this. When we welcome a country into NATO, we commit to defending that country as a partner and ally. Just as we would defend ourselves! The Bundeswehr has already bolstered its support for our eastern allies – and will continue to do so. I thank the Federal Defence Minister for this important gesture! We have deployed additional troops in Lithuania, where we lead the NATO battlegroup. We have extended and enhanced our participation in air policing in Romania. We want to contribute to the establishment of a new NATO unit in Slovakia. Our navy is helping to secure the North Sea and the Baltic as well as the Mediterranean with additional vessels. And we are also prepared to contribute to the defence of our allies' air space in Eastern Europe using anti-aircraft missiles. Our soldiers have often had only a brief time to prepare for these deployments in recent days. My message to them, and I am sure you agree, is: Thank you! Thank you for your valuable service – in particular at this time!

Ladies and gentlemen,

In view of the watershed that Putin's aggression entails, our standard is this: what is needed to secure peace in Europe will be done. Germany will contribute its share to these efforts in a spirit of solidarity. But stating that loud and clear today is not enough.

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To make it possible, the Bundeswehr needs new, strong capabilities. And that is the fourth point that I want to address, ladies and gentlemen. Anyone who reads Putin's historicising essays, who has watched his televised declaration of war on Ukraine, or who has recently – as I have done – held hours of direct talks with him, can no longer have any doubt that Putin wants to build a Russian empire. He wants to fundamentally redefine the status quo within Europe in line with his own vision. And he has no qualms about using military force to do so. We can see that today in Ukraine. We must therefore ask ourselves: What capabilities does Putin's Russia possess? And what capabilities do we need in order to counter this threat – today and in the future? It is clear that we must invest much more in the security of our country. In order to protect our freedom and our democracy. This is a major national undertaking. The goal is a powerful, cutting-edge, progressive Bundeswehr that can be relied upon to protect us. At the Munich Security Conference a week ago I said that we need aeroplanes that fly, ships that can set out to sea and soldiers who are optimally equipped for their missions. That is what is important. And it is quite certainly something that a country of our size and our significance within Europe should be able to achieve.

But we should be under no illusions. Better equipment, modern technology, more personnel – all of this costs a lot of money. We will therefore set up a special fund for the Bundeswehr. And I am deeply grateful to Federal Finance Minister Lindner for his support on this! The 2022 federal budget will provide a one-off sum of 100 billion euro for the fund. We will use this money for necessary investments and armament projects. We will now – year after year – invest more than two percent of our gross domestic product in our defence. And I now appeal to all parliamentary groups within the German Bundestag: We must secure this special fund in our Basic Law! There is one thing that I would like to add. We have set this goal not only because we have made a promise to our friends and allies to increase our defence expenditure to two percent of our economic output by 2024. We are also doing this for us, for our own security. In the awareness that the Bundeswehr alone does not have the means to contain all future threats.

We therefore need strong development cooperation. We will therefore strengthen our resilience – in terms of technology and as a society – for example against cyberattacks and disinformation campaigns, against attacks on our critical infrastructure and channels of communication. And we will keep pace with new technology. This is why it is so important to me, for example, that we build the next generation of combat aircraft and tanks here in Europe together with European partners, and particularly France. These projects are our utmost priority. Until the aircraft are operational, we will continue to develop the Eurofighter together. Another encouraging development is that the contracts for the Eurodrone were finally signed this week. We are also pushing ahead on

the purchase of the armed Heron drone from Israel. And with regard to nuclear sharing, we will procure a modern replacement for the outdated Tornado jets in good time. The Eurofighter is set to be equipped with electronic warfare capabilities. The F-35 fighter jet has the potential to be used as a carrier aircraft.

And finally, ladies and gentlemen, we will do more to guarantee a secure energy supply for our country. The Federal Government has already initiated one important measure to address this. And we will change course in order to eliminate our dependence on imports from individual energy suppliers. After all, the events of recent days and weeks have shown us that responsible, forward-looking energy policy is not just crucial for our economy and our climate. It is also crucial for our security. This means that the faster we make progress with the development of renewable energies, the better. And we are on the right track. We are an industrialised country aiming to become carbon-neutral by 2045!

With this goal on the horizon, we will have to take major decisions. For example, on building up a reserve of coal and gas. We have decided to increase the amount of natural gas in storage via long-term options to two billion cubic metres. Furthermore, we will acquire additional natural gas on the world markets – in consultation with the EU. And finally, we have made the decision to rapidly build two LNG terminals in Brunsbüttel and Wilhelmshaven. I would like to expressly thank Federal Economics Minister Habeck for his efforts to facilitate this! Our current short-term needs can dovetail with what is already needed long-term for the transformation to succeed. An LNG terminal that today receives gas can tomorrow be used to import green hydrogen. And amidst all this, we will of course not lose sight of the high energy prices. They have now been driven up yet further by Putin's war.

This week we have therefore agreed on a relief package, which includes lifting the surcharge under the Renewable Energy Sources Act by the end of this year, as well as an increase in the commuter tax allowance, a heating subsidy for low earners, subsidies for families and tax relief measures. The Federal Government will act swiftly to set these in motion. Our message is clear. We will not leave individuals and businesses to face this situation alone.

Ladies and gentlemen,

This watershed does not just affect our country. It affects all of Europe. And this, too, is both a challenge and an opportunity. The challenge consists in strengthening the sovereignty of the European Union sustainably and permanently. The opportunity lies in preserving the united front that we have demonstrated in recent days in agreeing the sanctions package. For Germany and for all of the EU's other member states, that means not simply asking what they can extract in Brussels for their own country. But asking:

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What is the best decision for our Union? Europe is our framework for action. Only when we understand that will we prevail over the challenges of our time.

And that brings me to my fifth and final point. Putin's war marks a turning point – and that goes for our foreign policy, too. As much diplomacy as possible, without being naive – that is what we will continue to strive for. But not being naive also means not talking simply for the sake of talking. True dialogue requires a willingness to engage – on both sides. That is lacking on Putin's side, quite clearly – and not just in recent days and weeks. What does this mean for the future? We will not refuse talks with Russia. Even in this extreme situation, it is the job of diplomacy to keep channels of communication open. Anything else, I believe, would be irresponsible.

Ladies and gentlemen,

We know what we stand for – not least given our own history. We stand for peace in Europe. We will never accept the use of force as a political instrument. We will always advocate the peaceful resolution of conflicts. And we will not rest until peace in Europe is secured. And we are not alone in this – we are joined by our friends and partners in Europe and worldwide. Our greatest strength is our alliances!

It is to them that we owe the great fortune our country has enjoyed for over thirty years: Living in a unified country, in prosperity and at peace with our neighbours. If we want the last thirty years to be more than a historical exception, then we must do everything we can to maintain the cohesion of the European Union, the strength of NATO, to forge even closer relations with our friends, our partners and all those who share our convictions worldwide. I am utterly confident that we can succeed in this. Because rarely have we and our partners been so resolved and so united. What unites us at this time is that we know the strength of free democracies.

We know that when something finds a broad consensus among politicians and the public, it will endure – even in this watershed moment and beyond. And so I thank you and all parliamentary groups in this House who have unequivocally condemned the Russian invasion of Ukraine for what it is: an absolutely unjustifiable attack on an independent country, on the peaceful order in Europe and the world. Today's motion for a resolution expresses that very clearly. I thank everyone who has taken a stance against Putin's war – and who has gathered here in Berlin and elsewhere for peaceful demonstrations. And I thank everyone who stands with us at this time for a free and open, fair and peaceful Europe. We will defend it.

Thank you very much!

Translated by PISM from German.

Annalena Baerbock, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Speech at the Körber Foundation's Berlin Foreign Policy Forum

18.10.2022

“Those dead schoolgirls in Ukraine. That could have been us”.

These are the words of an 18-year-old Estonian pupil who I met in a grammar school in Tallinn in April. Her words were fresh in my mind when I visited Bucha three weeks later on 10 May. A town on the outskirts of Kyiv, just as Potsdam is on the outskirts of Berlin.

“That could have been us” – this emotion shook me to the core in Bucha.

This has been the emotion of the pupil from Tallinn from the very first second of this brutal Russian war of aggression against Ukraine. To comprehend this, you need to bear in mind that she grew up differently than an 18-year-old in Berlin, Bochum or Braunschweig. She was born in 2004, the year in which Estonia and nine other Central and Eastern European countries joined the European Union. After decades of being divided into East and West, this was a joyful moment in our shared European history. And for us Germans, it seemed a foregone conclusion that this generation embodying a new EU would grow up in prosperity, freedom and peace. From the point of view of many citizens and also many young people from Central and Eastern Europe, 2004 above all signified a promise: you are safe!

After all, on the one hand, efforts to come to terms with the suppression, deportation and dictatorship continue in these countries to this day. It was the call for historical truth that mobilised people in the Baltic states even before 1989. After the end of the Cold War, people were finally free to talk about and remember what had happened. And the scars left by the crimes committed in the Soviet era are yet to heal in people's collective memory.

On the other, the feeling of being threatened by Russia was never completely erased in Central and Eastern Europe, even before 24 February. Your country, Urmas, was the target of one of Europe's most serious cyber attacks as early as 2007. You know what it means when trolls try to divide an entire society. Looking at Lithuania, you can understand this immediate threat. At the Suwalki Gap, the only land connection between the Baltic states and the other NATO Allies. A 65-kilometre strip between Belarus and Russia. When I was in Lithuania in April and looked at the map, I understood even better what this sentence means: “That could have been us”. There, the horror of the Russian tanks was and remains palpable.

Our Eastern neighbours thus share a profound craving for security. A security that we sometimes took all too much for granted in post-1990 Germany and a security in which we as a result invested too little. Many of us in Germany thought the European peace

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union, the security promise of 2004, had just fallen into our laps. Our Eastern neighbours know what it means to truly be able to live in peace. They know that you also have to invest in this peace.

And that is why I can well understand that the pupil had a second question, even though it made my heart ache. She asked, “Can we rely on Germany?”

This is a question I hear time and again. Not just from Eastern European pupils but also from my Estonian and Polish counterparts. And I also heard this question when I met 87-year old Wanda Traczyk-Stawska on 3 October at the Warsaw Insurgents Cemetery for the fallen of the 1944 Warsaw Uprising. She survived the Uprising. But she had taken up arms to protect herself from the horrors of the National Socialists. She, too, asked, “Can we rely on Germany? Can we trust that the Federal Republic of Germany will protect our Ukrainian friends and neighbours who are now having to experience what we experienced in 1944? That Germany, that you, will continue to protect these people even if the winter is a harsh one?” I am mentioning this here because these are questions which move me deeply – as Foreign Minister but also as a German citizen, as a mother, as a human being and because I as Foreign Minister have a responsibility. To ensure we can do more than just respond with a simple yes, I am working on building trust so that 18-year-olds do not need to ask the next German Foreign Minister the same question.

And that is why I am saying in all clarity here in Berlin what I said in Tallinn, what I said in Warsaw and again yesterday at the Foreign Affairs Council in Luxembourg: yes, we are there for you. The Baltic states’ and Eastern Europe’s security is Germany’s security! We will defend every square centimetre of our Allied territory if need be. And yes, we will also continue to support Ukraine intensively with arms. For we are not only supplying Ukraine with armaments in order to save lives, but, I hope, also to demonstrate our trust and solidarity.

And at the same time I have the hope that younger generations from our countries will find it easier to realise that and to stand shoulder to shoulder. After all, as many of you will have experienced in recent months, families are talking today about European security as they eat their dinner in Germany. Today, a fourth-grader says she is happy to be in NATO. Her grandmother sitting beside here takes a deep breath perhaps because she remembers how she took to the streets in 1980 to protest about the arms race. But today, the fourth-grader and her grandmother share the sentiment that people in Central and Eastern Europe have long experienced, namely that our security is fragile. That peace is precious and that we at the same time can be grateful to live in a union of peace in NATO and above all else in the European Union. The shockwaves that have permeated our security will shape the German and European identity for decades – and we will shape this identity with active policy-making.

The results of the Körber Foundation survey on German foreign policy are very interesting here. Even if many people – 52 percent in our country – want Germany to play a restrained role, 74 percent of those interviewed believe the Bundeswehr should be deployed to protect our Allies. Today, in this situation, most people in Europe, in Germany, know what is at stake. In this situation, we need to let our greatest strength prevail: our European cohesion, our solidarity with those who need our support.

After all, solidarity is not an end in itself. It is the cornerstone of our joint security. This European solidarity is our life insurance. That is why it also forms the basis of our future common security policy. That is what we laid down in the NATO Strategic Concept and at the Summit in Madrid. And it is also reflected in our National Security Strategy which we in the Federal Foreign Office, as lead ministry, are currently drawing up for the Federal Government. The backbone of our future security policy is the security of our lives, our freedom and the security for the fundamental necessities of our lives. That is why we are realigning our European and transatlantic defence capabilities.

I would like to focus on three points.

Firstly, that we will continue to support Ukraine – politically, economically, with humanitarian measures and armaments. After all, as it fights for survival, Ukraine is also defending European freedom.

And yes, if you look at the opinion polls today compared to February or March, questions are being voiced more loudly. And we are hearing flippant remarks: Why don't you get a move on with negotiating? We don't need to worry about each and every corner of Ukraine. Do we not need to be a bit more ready to compromise so that we finally get peace?"

But let me say here loud and clear – while it is important for us to have controversial discussions particularly at this time, while indeed this is the defining feature of strong democracies: to my mind this naive approach fell short as early as 2014. We have seen after all that the annexation of Crimea and what happened in Donbas were only a prelude to what has been unfolding in Ukraine since 24 February: further efforts to subjugate Ukraine entirely – the Russian President is making no bones about it.

And let's look at the situation once more: although half the world has done everything to re-establish peace in recent months; has worked to ensure the horror of this war finally ends; although half the world is begging the Russian President to finally withdraw his troops, he is at this time not recruiting negotiators but more soldiers to make further inroads into Ukraine. We are seeing that these men, most of whom are being sent into this war against their will, that these Russian soldiers and fighters are not bringing peace to Ukraine. Particularly in eastern Ukraine, they are bringing the most horrendous crimes: raped women, abducted children, fatal shots being fired at a mayor

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distributing bread to his people, fatal shots fired at a conductor who does not want to make music with the occupiers.

That is why we will continue to support the Ukrainians in their efforts to liberate their people for as long as is necessary. And that is why I say loud and clear that a victor's peace is no peace for the people of eastern Ukraine.

Secondly, we are equipping the Bundeswehr in such a way that it can be there as part of NATO to bring security to the people of Tallinn, Riga, Vilnius or Warsaw should it prove necessary. This includes better coordinating European armaments cooperation as part of the European pillar of NATO.

Currently we have so many different types of transportation vehicles in NATO and the EU that we are not even able to operate a shared pool of spare parts. To put it plainly, we should therefore not see European armaments cooperation as a joint economic project between various European nation-states but first and foremost as an instrument for shared security. And that is what we are working on.

Thirdly, we continue to stand up to Russian aggression.

With the sham referendums in the occupied territories, President Putin made abundantly clear that he is not looking for a way back. That is why for Europe, this is not a matter of security with Putin's Russia but of security against Putin's Russia. Thanks to our presence in Lithuania, we can deploy several thousand soldiers of our brigade to NATO's north-eastern flank within ten days. We are providing Eurofighters for air policing in Estonia and Patriots for Slovakia.

Yesterday in Luxembourg, we decided together that we can and will train 15,000 soldiers from Ukraine. Some in Poland, some in Germany where one of the headquarters will be. We are making plain that we are there for one another. We can rely on one another. And at the same time it is clear that we are in the midst of a hybrid war, that we are in the midst of rivalry between systems, between democracies and autocratic regimes. That is why a large part of our National Security Strategy and our work in the European Union and in NATO will consist of working to increase our shared resilience, working to ensure together that our infrastructure and networks are better protected.

The explosions at the pipelines on our shores show how vulnerable we are there. That is why we decided in NATO as a first step to do more to protect our underwater infrastructure.

Hundreds of thousands of kilometres of networks – whether telecommunications, electricity or railway tracks – are there to protect. And it is obvious that we cannot promise 100-percent security and protection for hundreds of thousands of kilometres. With 34,000 kilometres of tracks in Germany alone, it is clear that we cannot watch every section around the clock. But we can ensure that the nodal points are monitored. And

we can ensure that response chains work in such a way that no-one is harmed in the case of incidents or attacks. And we saw how well this can work just a few days ago. No-one was harmed and trains were running again after just a few hours.

All of these steps help make Europe safer. But we will only be able to guarantee our freedom in the long term if we think beyond the borders of our continent. If we face up to the rivalry between those who believe in international law and international cooperation on the one hand and authoritarian regimes on the other – also in the interest of countries in other parts of our world.

That means we need to learn first from the mistakes made in our policy on Russia in recent decades. I want to say very clearly that one-sided economic dependency makes us open to political blackmail.

When it comes to Russia, that's water under the bridge. We could talk at length about who warned whom when. Indeed our Eastern European friends have long been issuing such warnings. But we did not listen. We now need to be sure not to make the same mistake again. And that means we will have to take more account of this also in our policy towards China. That is why part of our National Security Strategy will be Germany's first strategy on China which, needless to say, will be firmly rooted in Europe's China strategy.

And we will make plain our realisation that no matter where we fail to take action, where we as European partners with shared values fail to stand by partners who share our values in the world, others are all too happy to step in to fill the vacuum – whether in the Western Balkans or in eastern Africa. That does not just hold true for security in the sense of defence policy issues. The vast majority of countries in our world say loud and clear that the greatest security risk is the climate crisis. And that is why the question as to how we support other countries in their efforts to deal with this climate crisis is a highly geopolitical question and the ultimate security question for the coming decades. Our message to our partners around the globe is the same message that we send to our Eastern European friends and neighbours: we are there for you. We are presenting you with strong and fair offers because we want to find solutions together and reflect the interests of all those involved and not create new, brutal dependencies.

That is why technical terms such as Global Gateway are to my mind central to our future cooperation. I hope and am pleased that this will also be the focus of intensive discussion as the day progresses. After all, solidarity and cooperation are not an end in themselves. With the fight against the climate crisis, with our shared energetic stand to ease the food crisis, our commitment to international law, we are supporting our partners. But we are above all else protecting our primordial security interests.

Ladies and gentlemen, the former Czech President Vaclav Havel once said that in the part of the world he inhabited the word solidarity was capable of shaking an entire

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power bloc. It was the solidarity of people who back then wanted to live in freedom and security instead of under Soviet dictatorship. It was also the solidarity of the people in Prague and Warsaw and it was the courage of the freedom movements in the Baltic states that forged the way for German reunification.

Solidarity is Europe's response to the brutal Russian war of aggression. Together we are stronger than this war. Thank you very much.

Olaf Scholz

Speech to the Bundestag on the support to Ukraine

25.01.2023

Honourable Members of Parliament,

I am very pleased to be able to answer your questions here today. I would like to make use of the opportunity to say something at the beginning. Shortly before I came here, I spoke to Ukrainian President Zelensky and discussed the current situation with him, as well as what Germany is doing and will do.

If you recall the concerns and reports from last year, then you can certainly say that this will not work: The vast majority of people thought that this would not work - that if Germany no longer receives gas from Russia, if we have to obtain oil and coal completely from other sources, this will not work without a massive economic crisis, without supply bottlenecks in the current winter and without all the challenges that this entails.

Some people have already talked about an autumn of rage and a winter of rage and similar things that would befall our country and that we would have to deal with.

The truth is: that hasn't happened. We're sitting here and it's warm - and that's the case everywhere in Germany. We have guaranteed the supply of energy - also through a completely, completely new pace in Germany, in which we have rebuilt infrastructures. And we have also made sure that we have the

We have maintained our country's economic performance, for example, by offsetting the high price increases for energy with corresponding support and relief packages worth billions.

So, as one commentator put it, the German government has blown the whistle on the economic crisis. We are now in a better position. The annual economic report presented today has once again demonstrated this very clearly. It can also be said quite clearly that we have shown what we are capable of, and that is very important to me.

We have taken all the necessary measures in a very short space of time, from restarting coal-fired power plants, extending the use of nuclear power plants, filling gas storage facilities and many import options for gas via Western European ports and then new terminals on the North German coasts. The first three have to some extent already seen the ships with which the gas can be imported. That is a good sign for Germany.

At this point, I would like to say that the speed we have shown here must be a speed that characterises our entire country, that we must make progress at a corresponding speed wherever it is a matter of winning the future. If we can see how quickly we can do this now that we have had to fight the current crisis, we must also do the same when it comes to expanding renewable energies, offshore and onshore wind power, solar energy

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and the electricity grids, for example, when it comes to supporting the transformation of industry so that we can actually achieve what we have set out to do: We want to be the first CO₂-neutral industrialised country in the world and, as the fourth-largest economy in the world, we want to move forward accordingly to show that it is possible and to encourage others to follow this path.

Despite everything, we have not forgotten cohesion and respect for our citizens; this is demonstrated by all the achievements we have set in motion.

The cause of the challenges we have had to overcome, which affect our own economy, is Russia's terrible imperialist war of aggression against Ukraine, a terrible war in which the principles we had agreed on in Europe for decades have been called into question. One of these principles is that borders must not be moved by force. That is what Russia has denounced. This is the turning point that I have spoken about here in this Bundestag.

It is therefore right that we support Ukraine in close coordination with our international partners: financially, with humanitarian funds, but also with arms deliveries. We have done this in a break with decades of state practice in Germany, and it can now be said that in Europe it is the UK and us who are providing the most support in the form of weapons for Ukraine. If you look back at the decisions we have already taken, you can say that Germany will always be at the forefront when it comes to supporting Ukraine. We are the country that is doing this with great energy and on a large scale.

We have also decided to supply heavy weapons: the anti-tank gun, the multiple rocket launcher and artillery. We have provided the Gepard anti-aircraft tank and continue to do so, as well as a modern air defence system such as IRIS-T, for which new missiles have just been delivered. We will also supply other systems. We are making the Patriot system available, as I recently decided together with the government. These are all measures that will help Ukraine to defend itself. We have taken all these decisions in harmony and in close co-operation with our allies. That is why they are effective and why we were able to take them. That is the principle that this government has.

We will continue to do so, as we did recently with the decision to supply infantry fighting vehicles together with the USA: Bradley the USA and we our Marder infantry fighting vehicle. The French provided armoured reconnaissance vehicles at the same time. As you can see: Close cooperation and coordination are the principle - and that's right, because there really is a war in Europe. Not far from us here in Berlin, it is taking place against a large country, Ukraine. That's why we must always be clear in everything we do.

We must do what is necessary and possible to support Ukraine, but at the same time prevent the war from escalating into a war between Russia and NATO. We will continue to adhere to this principle at all times.

There are no mathematical certainties for these things. No one can explain exactly where the right and wrong decisions are. And that is why it is right and fully intentional that we have worked our way forward step by step. We will continue to pursue this principle in the future. It is the only principle that guarantees security for Europe and Germany in such a dangerous matter.

This now also applies to the latest decision taken by the German government: We will also provide Ukraine with Leopard 2 main battle tanks. This is the result of further intensive consultations with our allies and international partners. I would like to make it clear that it was right and it is right that we did not allow ourselves to drift, but that we are relying on this close cooperation in such a matter and will continue to do so.

Our aim is to quickly provide two armoured battalions together with our allies. There are many countries that would like to contribute, and we will coordinate this and involve them so that this becomes possible step by step. As I said, Germany will provide Leopard 2A6 tanks from the Bundeswehr's stocks. If they still want this, we will train the Ukrainian crews here in Germany. We will provide training, logistics, ammunition and maintenance for the systems and, as I said, enable the partner countries to deliver. That is the right principle. We are talking about very effective weapons systems here, and it is right that we never provide these weapons systems alone, but always in close co-operation.

A word in conclusion. There are many people in this country who are concerned about a decision like this and the dimension that this weapon brings with it. And that is why I would like to.

Translated by PISM from German.

Olaf Scholz and Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Press conference after signing the German-Ukrainian security agreement in Berlin

16.02.2024

CHANCELLOR SCHOLZ: Ladies and gentlemen, before I report on our talks and the cooperation between Germany and Ukraine, I would like to talk about a piece of news that has now reached us all. It has not yet been finally confirmed, but we must assume that it is very likely to be true, namely that Mr Navalny has died in a Russian prison. That is something that is very depressing. I met Mr Navalny here in Berlin when he was in Germany trying to recover from the poisoning attack, and I also talked to him about the great courage it takes to go back to the country. He has probably now paid for this courage with his life. But we now know exactly what kind of regime it is. Anyone who voices criticism and stands up for democracy must fear for their safety and their lives. That is why we are all very depressed. We are with the family, the wife and child and all the relatives and friends. It is a terrible thing and also a sign of how Russia has changed. After the hopeful developments, which unfortunately took place a long time ago and were in the direction of democracy, this is no longer a democracy.

Dear Mr President, dear Volodymyr, it is a pleasure to welcome you back here in Berlin! We are meeting here shortly before the second anniversary of Russia's murderous invasion of Ukraine. Our thoughts are with all those who lost their lives, but also with all those brave Ukrainian men and women who stood in the way of the Russian aggressor. The important thing is that Putin has not achieved any of his goals. The Ukrainian armed forces, on the other hand, have managed to liberate more than half of the territories occupied by Russian troops. The resilience of the people in Ukraine is admirable.

Dear Volodymyr, relations between Germany and Ukraine have reached a whole new level in the past two years. From the very beginning, we have supported Ukraine in its heroic defence campaign - financially, politically and with the supply of weapons. We have provided around 7.1 billion euros for military support for Ukraine in 2024 and six billion euros in commitment appropriations for subsequent years. In total, Germany has now provided around 28 billion euros in services and funds or commitment authorisations for future services for military support to Ukraine. This makes Germany the second largest military supporter of Ukraine. That is well known.

Today we are putting together a further military aid package worth around 1.1 billion euros for Ukraine. Among other things, it includes the delivery of 36 tank and wheeled howitzers from industrial stocks, 120,000 rounds of artillery ammunition, two additional Skynex air defence systems and urgently needed IRIS-T missiles.

But today we are also taking a historic step further. Ladies and gentlemen, President Zelenskyy and I have just signed an agreement on our long-term bilateral security commitments. The significance of this document can hardly be overestimated. It stipulates that Germany will continue to support the independent Ukraine in its defence against the Russian war of aggression; as I have often said: as long as it takes!

We will also support our Ukrainian partners in building up a modern, defence force to deter any future attack. Should Russian aggression occur again in the future, we have concluded detailed support agreements: diplomatically, economically and, as today, with military equipment.

With this agreement, we are realising what the G7 countries promised last summer in Vilnius; a promise that more than 20 countries have now joined. We are the second country after the UK to make such a commitment. Other countries will soon follow, including our French friends.

Today's agreement also includes extensive support services in the civilian sector, for example in clearing mines, securing the energy infrastructure and rebuilding the destroyed country.

I would like to take this opportunity to expressly thank the Foreign Minister and the Defence Minister. Both of them have worked very hard to ensure that we get the commitment for Ukraine so quickly.

The agreement reflects the values that we share. It clearly refers to democracy and the rule of law, the order in which our societies want to live. Consequently, Ukraine is committed to continuing the reforms that are central to EU accession in particular.

Mr President, dear Volodymyr, it is truly remarkable how much our countries have moved closer together over the past two years. Today's agreement is representative of this, and it stands for a future in which Ukraine can continue to develop in peace, a peace, it should be noted, with regard to those who are calling for a swift ceasefire and negotiations with Russia, which must not be a Russian dictated peace.

Let me be clear: of course we all want this brutal war to end soon, we as well as everyone in Ukraine. Unfortunately, we can see that: Russia is not ready for a lasting and just peace. On the contrary, it is mercilessly sticking to its war aims, as Putin has made clear again just recently. Two years after the start of this appalling war, we are therefore sending a crystal-clear message to the Russian President today: We will not let up in our support for Ukraine! We will continue to stand firmly by the side of the Ukrainians! Let me also appeal to the US Congress today to take the necessary political decisions to ensure continued financial and military support for Ukraine.

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Dear Volodymyr, I am delighted that you have come to Berlin today for the signing ceremony and for this historic step in our relations. Slava Ukraini! [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

PRESIDENT ZELENSKYY: Thank you very much for this special relationship with Ukraine, with the Ukrainians, especially you personally, Olaf, but also the German people, the families, the ordinary people, for this help and treatment. This great support is historic for our soldiers and armed forces and for the people who are working towards victory in Ukraine; of course, this is also on behalf of those who have found refuge in Germany, a very large number of people who have had to leave their country. Thank you, Mr Federal Chancellor, Olaf!

Dear delegation members, dear journalists, German people, dear friends, today, as the Federal Chancellor has already said, is a very important day for our peoples, for Ukraine, for the Germans and also for Europe, if we want to defend international law and the independence of nations together. In this we are united globally. I am very grateful for these security commitments, for the military support and for the new package that has been put together. We need this right now. We are talking about more than a billion euros. This is artillery ammunition, which we need so urgently, -this is critical equipment for us on the front line-, these are howitzers and other weapons as well as air defence systems, which we need so desperately. Our people need them. Unfortunately, we have now seen a decline in what we are receiving from our partners, and German support is vital to us and our battles on the front.

Dear Mr Chancellor, dear Olaf, I very much appreciate you standing by us, as the whole of Germany is doing. This aid -artillery ammunition and other weapons -will arrive in a short time. This security agreement is simply unprecedented. It is a very important bilateral document. It's not just about a new direction, so to speak, in our co-operation. It is about Germany wanting to protect normality in Europe and in the world, because war must never become part of everyday life for any people in this world. The aggressors should know that they will lose even before they carry out their criminal activities and attacks.

Before this war, we talked about the preventive sanctions, about the pressure on Russia when Russia wanted to deter us with this war. We talked about the weapons that could have deterred the aggressor, about this anti-war logic. We want to base this new security architecture, this security agreement, on this logic. Specifically, this agreement with Germany is about support. The military support has a volume of more than seven billion euros. These are very clear conditions and agreements.

There are many moments that prove that Russia is responsible for all the war crimes committed against the Ukrainian people. Every war crime will be punished, and that is

only fair. This agreement also mentions sanctions against Russia and Russian assets that have been frozen in various countries. Any terrorist state should understand that this can be confiscated and used for defence and reconstruction.

It is very important to me that this is about the position on European integration and Euro-Atlantic integration. We are already de facto part of the European or Euro-Atlantic family, but at some point we have to formalise this in legal terms.

This is a very powerful document. Dear Olaf, thank you very much for this! I would like to thank our teams, the German and Ukrainian teams, who were involved in the preparation.

One more thing: today we had a one-to-one meeting with the Federal Chancellor and as part of a delegation meeting. We naturally discussed the situation on the front, which is very important, and the advantages that the Russian aggressors have in terms of artillery and other weapons. That is true. But we are doing everything we can to defend ourselves effectively even in these circumstances. I thank you for your international support, and of course I thank Germany!

We also talked about air defence. Germany is leading the way here. I am so grateful to our German partners! We have already saved thousands of lives from Russian missiles. But we need even more. Today we spoke with the Federal Chancellor about very specific things that can save even more lives in Ukraine. No matter how difficult it is, and no matter what challenges we face, we should always remember this: Only if we are united can we protect our lives.

Putin always kills. He is this war. He is the personification of this war, and he will not stop, he will not stop. We can only stop it and stop it together. It is very regrettable, as the Federal Chancellor also said, that Alexei Navalny died in a Russian prison. It is obvious to me that he was killed like thousands of others who were tortured to death because of this one person. Putin doesn't care who dies, as long as he sticks to his position. That's why he should lose everything. He should lose, he should lose everything, and then he should also be held responsible for the crimes.

Dear Olaf, dear German people, I would like to thank you once again from the bottom of my heart and on behalf of every Ukrainian for the very important support you are providing! This support is very pragmatic, very strong, and I thank you. Slava Ukraini! [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

Boris Pistorius, Minister of Defence

Munich Security Conference panel “Connecting Hemispheres: Aligning Strategic Priorities in a Multi-Crisis Era”

17.02.2024

Ms [Silvia] Amaro, Minister [Stergomena] Tax, Minister [Mary] Ng,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This is not the time for sugar-coating today’s reality.

From the northern to the southern hemisphere, crises have been unfolding. Conflicts and wars are intensifying at alarming pace. Global challenges such as climate change, pandemics, and global threats, in particular international terrorism, are heating up existing local and regional conflicts. In the Middle East many of these evils seem to reinforce each other. As we have seen in the barbaric terror attacks by Hamas on Israel on the 7th of October. I want to make it very clear: We stand by Israel.

One aggressive power is seeking to exploit local and regional conflicts for its own revisionist agenda. The cruel result of which we see in Ukraine.

As we speak, here in peaceful Munich, Putin’s illegal and inhumane war is bringing unspeakable suffering to the Ukrainian people.

This war is about much more than two states fighting over territory. This war is about the question of whether we will allow an imperialist power to impose its will on another sovereign state.

Our common answer to this question will be heard loud and clear around the world. It will influence the appetite of revisionist and expansionist powers for waging war against their neighbours. In Africa, the Middle East, and the Indo-Pacific. Together, as defenders of the free world, we have a common responsibility and the willingness to get this answer right.

Whatever differences there may be between the countries of the north and the south: Let us overcome them. Let us draw closer together to make one thing clear: We stand for cooperation and support, not hatred and destruction. We stand for freedom and the rules-based international order that benefits us all.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

After the Cold War, we tried to build an inclusive pan-European security architecture together with Russia. Unfortunately, we failed. Today we know why: All these attempts ran counter to the Kremlin’s strategy of reinstalling its dominance in Eastern and Central Europe.

It is now our common responsibility to help Ukraine to restore its territorial integrity. It is our responsibility to strengthen its resilience. Ukraine’s future lies in NATO and it

lies in the EU. That is where I want to see the country and more importantly, it is where Ukraine sees its future. That means we will support them in fighting and winning this war.

Our support to Ukraine is firm and sustained. We will hold out. We will stand strong – no matter how long Putin continues this illegal and senseless war against a sovereign, freedom-loving nation!

At the same time, we will have to live with dividing lines in Europe for decades to come. Free and democratic Europe on one side, authoritarian and war-mongering Russia on the other. Our messages must be clear – not only in words, but also in deeds! Effective deterrence is our life insurance.

For me, deterrence has at least three dimensions:

First and foremost: Money! We need the resources to invest in deterrence. I am proud to say that this year we will spend over two percent of our GDP on defence. I am also realistic enough to see that this might not be enough in the years to come.

Second: Production! Without a strong defence industry, we will not be able to invest in equipment, arms and ammunition. In Germany, new production lines have been opened, for example for producing Gepard ammunition or air defence equipment. On Monday, Chancellor Scholz and I paved the way for boosting the production of 155-millimeter ammunition in Northern Germany.

Third and last: Operational readiness! Across NATO's eastern flank, we are ramping up the presence of the Bundeswehr: most prominently by permanently deploying a robust, combat-ready brigade in Lithuania. Together with our Allies we are sending a strong message to Putin: If any Russian soldier puts their boots on Allied territory, we will defend every inch of it.

As a frontline state during the Cold War, Germany benefitted greatly from the Allied presence in our country.

All of us in free Europe are grateful for the US security umbrella over the past seventy-five years. Vice-President Kamala Harris said it quite clearly yesterday: Both sides of the Atlantic have always benefitted from this close partnership. It remains central to our security and we do not take it for granted.

We Europeans are well aware that America's resources and attention will increasingly move towards the Indo-Pacific. Regardless of who might be at the helm in the White House.

That is why we are working hard to make the European contribution to transatlantic burden-sharing more relevant, for example by investing in collective solutions. Here are three examples:

GERMANY

The European Sky Shield Initiative with already 21 participating nations will significantly enhance the European contribution to air defence in Europe.

Joint procurement and development are the order of the day – not only in air defence but also for submarines, frigates, tanks or ammunition.

The Military Mobility corridor that we have set up together with our Dutch and Polish friends will make it much easier to move troops and equipment from the Atlantic to the eastern flank if needed.

But it is also clear: We Europeans must and can do more. And we need to do it faster.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Europe and the West are not alone and never have been. The countries of the Global South are – to a considerable extent – shaping the 21st century. They are influencing our reality in Europe, the US and elsewhere.

If we want to be a part of these dynamics – and I definitely think we should – we are well advised to engage with these power houses. Much more than we have done in the past. Especially as we are facing many of the same challenges.

Engaging also means moving out of our comfort zone, respecting the interests, priorities and worldviews of different nations. It means not forcing them to choose sides and, most importantly, lending support where needed.

As for the Indo-Pacific, we will again send maritime units to the region this year. Underlining our commitment to open and secure sea routes that are being challenged for example by China in the South China Sea. We will also support the enforcement of UN sanctions against North Korea, regardless of Russia's violation of these sanctions.

We will participate in protecting maritime traffic in the Red Sea. Pending parliamentary approval, we will be deploying a frigate from next week as part of the robust European Union-led Red Sea operation.

In Africa, we are committed to African ownership and to African solutions to African problems. We stand ready to assist those countries that have an interest in peace and stability. That want our support in capacity building with material and with military expertise. As a contribution to the protection of the rules-based international order.

Already today, German military advisory groups are active in various countries of the African continent. We are ready to send more if asked. We seek a partnership of equals – I made this very clear during my visits to Africa last year.

Closer cooperation means getting off our high horse. That is what I mean by “leaving our comfort one”.

We want to be reliable partners to our friends abroad. Including when it comes to armaments cooperation. We do not want arms produced in Germany to fall into the wrong hands. That is very clear. At the same time, we cannot expect countries in the

Global South to defend themselves and the rules-based international order if we deny them the equipment they need!

If we refuse to cooperate with certain African states because they do not fully meet our standards, our values, then Russia will step in. Usually not for the good of the country or the stability of the region. What will we have gained then? Not much, to be honest.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Last year in Munich I emphasised that I am a child of the Cold War. As a child of the Cold War I remember the tremendous efforts we had to make in order to defend our freedom, our sovereignty, our peace and stability.

Today the world is much more complicated. Today's challenges are not exclusively challenges of one hemisphere or the other. Today's crises are more and more interconnected. Even if conflicts are far away, their impacts are not.

Only together will we have the chance to shape the world we live in. Let us rise to the occasion. We must stand strong for what we believe in: a future in which all nations have the right to determine their own destinies, to pursue their own paths and to join the alliances of their choice.

Annalena Baerbock

Speech at the UN General Assembly

24.02.2024.

“I am afraid the world will forget about us... because everyone is so focused on Russia’s war and the violence in the Middle East.” That’s what a woman in Gorom, in South Sudan, told me. This woman had fled the violence in Sudan – with only a small bag of belongings, carrying her child on her hip. Her words have not left me since. And I know that they ring true for countless men, women and children around the world who go to bed hungry, who suffer violence. As I stand here, I say to you straight out: We have not forgotten about you.

The fact that Russia’s brutal war against Ukraine has been raging for two years does not mean that we don’t see your suffering. A schoolgirl deported from the eastern territories of Ukraine, torn away from her parents, is a child who suffers. A toddler in Gaza who has lost his parents is a child who suffers. A boy in Sudan who is hungry is a child who suffers. Every life matters in equal measure. Humanity is indivisible. The worst thing we could do is to play off one person’s pain against another’s. We would only play into the hands of those who seek to divide us to push their ruthless agenda in the world.

That’s why it is nothing but cynical when at the G20 meeting in Rio, just two days ago, the Russian Foreign Minister openly asked why the world is so preoccupied with Russia’s war against Ukraine. Mr Lavrov, we are preoccupied with your war because your war is causing death, pain and destruction. Not just in Ukraine. Not just in Bucha and Irpin. And in the eastern territories of Ukraine. But around the world. Russia has bombed ports in Ukraine, on purpose, to prevent Ukrainian grain from being exported to the world – using food as a weapon. And this could stop tomorrow if the Russian President were to end this war now. If we care about a world in which every life matters in equal measure, it is up to each and every one of us to stand up against Russia’s war. The United Nations was founded for that exact purpose – to make sure “a life is a life”. That humanity is indivisible.

President Putin has proved again and again that, to him, human lives count for nothing – neither abroad nor at home, where he now doesn’t even shy away from arresting Russian children for laying down flowers to mourn the death of Alexei Navalny.

As I explained to the woman in South Sudan: we did not chose to be so preoccupied with Russia’s war of aggression. It is the Russian President’s ruthless actions that are forcing us. But that doesn’t mean that we don’t see the suffering in Sudan, that we don’t see the suffering in the Middle East. Like many of you, the devastating humanitarian situation in Gaza is keeping us awake at night. 17,000 children left without a mother or

father. Hundreds of thousands desperate for food and water. This suffering needs to end now. We need Hamas to release all the men, women and children it took hostage in its ruthless attack on Israel on Oct 7th. We need a humanitarian pause to work towards a sustainable ceasefire. To find a path towards a life in dignity, peace and security for both Israelis and Palestinians. In two states.

I know that this conflict has stirred up intense emotions in many of our countries. That's why it is so important to not give in to those who try to play off one person's pain against another's. Political leadership means standing up to polarisation. Protecting our societies from the poison of dehumanisation. That is the message to send today, here at the General Assembly. We stand with Ukraine, as long as it takes. Because we stand against a world of ruthlessness. We stand for a world in which a life is a life – whether it be Palestinian, Israeli, Sudanese or Ukrainian.

ITALY

Giorgia Meloni, Prime MinisterSpeech at Hostomel airport on second anniversary
of Russia's aggression against Ukraine

24.02.2024

There are heroic gestures by few men that change the course of history. One of them took place here, on the 24th of February two years ago.

Here, where the heroic resistance of the Ukrainian people started.

Here, where Putin's plan to overthrow the democratically elected government in few days and replace it with a puppet government, which would respond to his instructions, failed.

This place is a symbol of Moscow's failure. This place is a symbol of Ukrainian pride.

In this place we breathe history, and history reminds us that there is something stronger than missiles, bombs, hunger or cold. And that something is love for the Homeland, love for freedom, and the will to ensure a future of prosperity and well-being for one's children.

A verse of the Ukrainian national anthem says: "We will give our bodies and souls for our freedom." It happened here, on this runway, among what remains of the world's largest aircraft, it happened here that brave and proud Ukrainians gave their bodies and their souls for their freedom and their Nation, igniting that hope that has given soul and body in these two years' resistance. Everything around us reminds us of what happened in this decisive battle. And what remains on the ground turns this place into a hymn to freedom.

And here we are today to say thanks to those men and women who, on the 24th of February two years ago, did not run away and instead fought, for themselves, for their families, for what they hold most dear. Europe, the West, are here to celebrate an act of love because here the Ukrainians defended what they loved and, in so doing, they also defended us. They fought to give us the chance to be here today, to say that this land is a piece of our home, and that we will do our part to defend it.

Since that battle, 730 days have now passed. For 730 days, Ukrainians have been reminding us what it means to believe in one's freedom and one's nation. For 730 days Ukrainians have been explaining to us that surviving does not necessarily mean living. For 730 days Ukrainians have been showing the world that no help can be enough if, upstream, there is not someone determined to fight.

This place tells us all this, here where the first page was written to return a future of freedom to Ukraine.

Thank you.

JAPAN

Fumio Kishida, Prime Minister

Press conference on the anniversary of the Russian aggression against Ukraine

24.02.2023

It was a year ago today that Ukraine was subjected to Russian aggression. For those of us living in the modern era, this date, February 24, has become a date we cannot – indeed, we must not – forget. People the world over sat in shock at the violence of Russian tanks and missiles mercilessly assaulting houses in which ordinary people lived as well as bridges and electrical power plants and the outrage of innocent civilians being killed.

Now, one year since that date, the fight to restore justice remains precarious. We are witnessing the Ukrainian people demonstrate through their actions their firm conviction and courage to defend their nation by themselves. What is bolstering these actions is the spirit of solidarity among nations.

The Japanese people have also clearly shown solidarity with the people of Ukraine over this past year. We accepted over 2,000 evacuees from Ukraine, with over 300 local governments announcing livelihood support and other assistance and more than 800 companies offering assistance such as providing employment opportunities. In addition, the Government has just recently taken the decision to extend by one year its provision of daily living expenses and other support to evacuees from Ukraine who have no relatives in Japan.

The Japanese people have been seriously affected by the rising prices of energy and food items as a result of these outrageous acts. The solidarity the Japanese people have shown despite this is, I am certain, well understood by the people of Ukraine. As prime minister, I express my sincere respect to you, the Japanese people. As I said earlier, the progress of the war is still difficult to predict, but in order to restore peace and order to the international community, I ask earnestly for the ongoing understanding and cooperation of you in the public.

To ensure that unilateral attempts to change the status quo by force are not tolerated under any circumstances, we must steadily implement assistance to Ukraine and sanctions against Russia and restore the peaceful world order based on the rule of law of international law, including the UN Charter.

Forming the crux of the international community's firm resolve is the G7, whose presidency rests with Japan this year. Besides hosting the Hiroshima Summit in May, all throughout this year, from January to December, Japan, as the country holding the G7 presidency, will lead the way in creating a united front in dealing with the Ukraine issue.

At the same time, Japan is also serving as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council from this year, and we will responsibly take on this role within the

JAPAN

Security Council as well. Today, after this press conference, I will host a G7 leaders' video conference beginning at 11 PM which I have also invited President Zelenskyy to join. The military situation is becoming increasingly strained with, for example, increasingly broad-based moves by the West to provide weapons assistance, while Russia is at the same time newly expanding its offensive.

Today, I intend for us to have an exchange of views about this latest situation, reaffirm the unity of the G7, and engage in intensive discussions among the leaders regarding how we should provide assistance for reconstruction and other such topics. Also, I expect that the G7 will present a new approach regarding sanctions against Russia. Furthermore, military support for Russia by third countries has been pointed out. In light of that, I expect the G7 to call for a halt to such support.

Within the G7, Japan is the sole member from Asia, but there is no "Europe" or "Asia" when it comes to rules for peace. The situation surrounding Japan is becoming increasingly tense, including frequent missile launches by North Korea. In addition, sharply rising energy and food prices are striking a blow to countries all around the world, including in Asia. I will work actively to persuade Asian nations to unite to protect the peaceful world order, and at the same time, with the leaders of the U.S. and Europe, I will engage in discussions that take Asian nations' true intentions also into account.

Japan is the only country anywhere in the world to have suffered the devastation of atomic bombings during war. Threats by Russia to use nuclear weapons must not be allowed to defile the past 77 years of history of nuclear weapons not being used. I express my grave concern over President Putin stating this week that Russian implementation of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (New START) is suspended. The continuation of efforts towards nuclear disarmament is becoming increasingly critical, and Japan will lead such discussions within the G7.

Unfortunately, in the fight against Russia's aggressive acts, for now, there is no end in sight. In the face of that harsh reality, what Ukraine needs most of all is equipment for the battle against Russia. Japan has been providing Ukraine with bulletproof vests, helmets, drones, and so on, but there are restrictions on providing equipment with the capacity to kill or wound, in accordance with our Three Principles of Transfer of Defense Equipment and Technology. However, that is precisely why Japan is mobilizing its strengths and engaging in well-tailored assistance that pays careful attention to the needs of the Ukrainian people.

Since immediately after the aggression began, Japan has announced a total of US\$7.1 billion of Ukraine-related assistance, including about US\$900 million of humanitarian assistance and assistance for recovery and reconstruction and roughly US\$5.5 billion of additional financial support announced just recently. We will continue to support Ukraine seamlessly, in a way that is uniquely Japanese.

In concrete terms, first of all, amidst continual Russian attacks on energy, infrastructure, and so on, there have been calls for an international response to Ukraine's power shortages. Japan will, in partnership with the United States, lead cooperation under the G7+ framework related to support for the energy field. For example, the supplying of about 1,500 generators that Japan is undertaking has been providing warmth in the bitter cold to several hundred thousand Ukrainians. Also, in order to benefit an even broader range of people, we will move forward in supplying about 10 large-scale transformer facilities and about 140 units of power-related equipment.

In areas where the fighting is over, it is critically important to clear landmines and unexploded ordnance, ensure safety, and move forward with recovery and reconstruction. Japan has many years of experience in landmine clearance and reconstruction cooperation in Cambodia and elsewhere. Leveraging the knowledge we gained there, Japan launched a training course for Ukraine on how to use mine detectors, working together with Cambodia, which has amassed a lot of experience through Japanese cooperation. We will proceed with supplying mine detection and demining equipment as we continue to provide this training, so that Ukraine can immediately move forward on mine clearance in earnest. In addition, the disposal of rubble and debris is a prerequisite for recovery and reconstruction. Towards that end, we will also push forward in providing construction equipment and related items.

Before Russia launched its aggression, Ukraine supplied agricultural produce to countries all around the world as one of the world's leading grain-producing areas. That supply was impeded by Russian aggression, sparking an international food crisis. Japan has been providing assistance to expand grain storage capacity in Ukraine, as well as food aid to regions that have been impacted by the situation. However, what is important is to provide support so that Ukraine can once again supply grain to the world as the world's food basket.

From that perspective, we are also prepared to help restore Ukraine's agricultural production capacity by procuring Ukrainian corn and other seeds and providing them in a prioritized manner to women, youth, and small-scale farmers. Efforts to restore Ukraine's agricultural production and export capacity are also important in our relations with the Global South, and we intend to continue expanding our uniquely Japanese forms of assistance.

In addition, we will implement a wide range of support, including for education, strengthening governance, and protecting cultural property, that utilizes knowledge unique to Japan and meets Ukraine's needs.

It is also vital that we support countries neighboring Ukraine that have been affected by Russian violence. We have been providing yen loans to Poland, Moldova, and other

neighboring countries, which have been facing a large influx of evacuees and soaring energy prices, among other hardships.

Today's Ukraine may be tomorrow's East Asia. It has been with a strong sense of urgency that I have imposed rigorous sanctions and provided assistance to Ukraine. I have also made ardent appeals at a wide range of meetings and summit meetings, including the G7 and G20 summits, the East Asia Summit, and the ASEAN Summit.

Supporting Ukraine as it endures aggression is a matter of not only providing assistance to Ukraine but also demonstrating through our actions our determination to fully defend the international order based on the rule of law, never recognizing unilateral changes to the status quo by force. Now, with the world at a historic turning point, we will demonstrate our diplomatic capacity, leveraging Japan's unique position. Moreover, we will act in cooperation with like-minded countries to contribute to building the next peaceful world order.

This year, important international meetings will be held one after the other in the Indo-Pacific region, with the May G7 Hiroshima Summit, the September G20 summit in India, the November APEC Economic Leaders' Meeting in the U.S., and the year-end ASEAN-Japan Commemorative Summit in Japan.

In order to restore peace and stability to the international community, from here in Asia, we will make our greatest possible efforts to amply demonstrate Japan's diplomatic capacity that is trusted by the world. The expectations towards Japan are great indeed. Yet this is also a critical opportunity for Japan. As its starting point, tonight I intend to engage in very substantial discussions with the other G7 leaders.

With the Ukraine situation still in a state of uncertainty, there continues to be a need to stay alert regarding soaring commodity prices globally. In addition to the measures that have been undertaken in succession until now, reductions in electricity and natural gas fees have been underway since January, and, given the current situation, this morning I convened a meeting of the Task Force on Prices, Wages, and Daily Living and issued directions to work to curb utility fees, including through strict and careful assessments of applications to raise electricity fees. I also gave instructions on implementing measures to curb dramatic changes in the price of animal feed.

Here as we mark the passage of one year since the start of Russian aggression against Ukraine, my remarks today have focused on our measures to respond to the Ukraine situation. We need to ask the public for substantial assistance, but we will thoroughly and reliably take policies to protect and support people's daily lives. I ask for your understanding and cooperation.

Fumio KishidaJapan-Ukraine Conference for Promotion of Economic Growth
and Reconstruction in Tokyo19.02.2024

Prime Minister [Denys] Shmyhal! Ladies and Gentlemen!

Firstly, let me express my utmost respect again for the courage and perseverance of the Ukrainian people, who have been standing up in defense for the freedom and independence of their country for two years since the outbreak of Russian aggression. As the G7 Chair last year, Japan led international discussions on supporting Ukraine and has provided robust package, including financial assistance. Japan has stood with Ukraine and will continue to do so.

The origin of today's Conference dates back to my own visit to Ukraine March 2023. I visited Ukraine as G7 Chair. In my meeting in Kyiv with President Zelenskyy, he outlined his strong expectations for Japan's experience, its technology and private investment by our country for the long term reconstruction of Ukraine.

Following the visit, I decided to hold this Japan-Ukraine Conference for the Promotion of Economic Growth and Reconstruction with a conviction that Japan has much potential to make what I call "Japan's unique contribution".

President Zelenskyy once stated, "Your money is not charity. It's an investment in global security and democracy." I would like to make one additional statement. That is "investing in the future." The war in Ukraine is still going on at this very moment and the situation is not easy. The promotion of economic reconstruction, however, is not only investment for the future of Ukraine but also investing in Japan and the whole globe. We must strive for the future of all of us. Japan, through both the public and private sectors, will provide robust support for economic reconstruction and industrial enhancement that will lead to the economic growth of Ukraine, a country with significant potential. It is our aim to support Ukraine so that the country can achieve comprehensive economic development from the primary to tertiary sectors, including in such key areas as agriculture, manufacturing, and the IT industry.

With these themes in mind today, I would like to share with the Ukrainian people "3 Principles", "5 Actions", "50 Commitments" for the purpose of realizing "Japan's unique contribution".

To start with, there are three important principles for promoting "Japan's unique contribution".

The first of the 3 Principles is "inclusiveness". With an emphasis on "human dignity," we will stay right beside with all the Ukrainian people, including women and children,

and from a “Women, Peace and Security” or WPS perspective we will support Ukraine’s self-sustaining development and reconstruction for the long term.

The second is “partnership”. The main actors in realizing Ukraine’s reconstruction must be the people of Ukraine. The very key to promoting the long-term reconstruction of Ukraine in a sustainable manner is to work together with the Ukrainian people, rather than providing unilateral support from Japan. Japan will faithfully address the needs of the Ukrainian side and respond to those needs attentively.

The third is “knowledge and technology”. Japan’s public and private sectors will all work together through an all-Japan approach, utilizing the knowledge derived from Japan’s postwar and disaster reconstruction efforts, as well as advanced technology and knowhow from the private sector. Of course, the door is open to participation not only by major companies but also by small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs) with high-end technologies.

In addition to these 3 Principles, we will take the following five actions to promote Japanese private investment and create employment in Ukraine. I would like to announce those as important deliverable of today’s conference.

First, we will conclude the new Tax Convention as part of the development of a legal infrastructure. We will also commence negotiations for a review of the Investment Agreement.

Second, to boost Ukraine’s reconstruction, we will support Ukraine through international financial institutions by contributing to by the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)’s capital increase and by providing a two-step loan through the Black Sea Trade and Development Bank by JBIC.

Third, as a form of bilateral cooperation we will implement public-private partnership projects through ODA and JICA’s Private Sector Investment Finance for Ukrainian venture capitalists.

Fourth, we will establish a JETRO office in Kyiv to expand business ties, investment and trade between the two countries. In addition, NEXI will establish new credit lines to reduce investment and trade risks for Japanese companies.

Fifth, we will also introduce measures to relax the multi entry visa requirements for Ukrainian people involved in Japan-Ukraine cooperation projects.

Specific commitments based on the 3 Principles and the 5 Actions are reflected in the over 50 cooperation outcome documents between Japanese companies, including startups, and their Ukrainian partners. Japan will steadily follow up on these measures and items. Japan will continue to do our very best to support Ukraine’s economic development at various phases ranging from initial emergency assistance and the day-to-day livelihood reconstruction of to more robust stages of industrial reconstruction

and enhancement. We will also assist Ukraine in its efforts in day-to-day rebuilding of people's lives and in creating new industries through various measures of ours to build economic foundations of the country, which will help make its recovery/reconstruction processes more sustainable and, ultimately, make its whole economy more strong.

The reconstruction of Ukraine will not be achieved overnight. The solidarity of the international community in this line of effort also needs to be strengthened. We will work with our partners and international organizations, and closely coordinate with the G7 and other countries. We will make our measures and efforts closely in line with various developments in the international discussion, including an international Ukraine Recovery Conference to be hosted by Germany in coming June.

It is the very interest of Japan and the international community as a whole that, overcoming the scars of Russia's aggression, Ukraine realizes its reconstruction and regain its vitality. We sincerely ask for your cooperation of all the participants gathering here for today's Conference.

Thank you.

KENIA

Martin Kimani, Permanent Representative to the UN

Statement during the Security Council's urgent meeting on the situation in Ukraine

21.02.2022

Thank you, Mr. President,

I thank Under-Secretary General Rosemary DiCarlo for her briefing.

We meet tonight on the brink of a major conflict in Ukraine. The diplomacy we urged on the 17th of February is failing.

The territorial integrity and sovereignty of Ukraine stands breached. The Charter of the United Nations continues to wilt under the relentless assault of the powerful. In one moment it is invoked with reverence by the very same countries who then turn their backs on it in pursuit of objectives diametrically opposed to international peace and security.

In the two last meetings on the situation in Ukraine, and the buildup of forces by the Russian Federation, Kenya urged that diplomacy be given a chance. Our cry was not heeded, and more importantly, the Charter's demand for states to 'settle their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered' has been profoundly undermined.

Today, 'the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of Ukraine' has been effected. Kenya is gravely concerned by the announcement made by the Russian Federation to recognise Donetsk and Luhansk regions of Ukraine as independent states. In our considered view, this action and announcement breaches the territorial integrity of Ukraine.

We do not deny that there may be serious security concerns in these regions. But they cannot justify today's recognition of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent states. Not when there were multiple diplomatic tracks available and underway that had the ability to offer peaceful solutions.

Mr President,

Kenya, and almost every African country, was birthed by the ending of empire. Our borders were not of our own drawing. They were drawn in the distant colonial metropolises of London, Paris, and Lisbon with no regard for the ancient nations that they cleaved apart. Today, across the border of every single African country live our countrymen with whom we share deep historical, cultural and linguistic bonds. At independence, had we chosen to pursue states on the basis of ethnic, racial or religious homogeneity, we would still be waging bloody wars these many decades later.

Instead, we agreed that we would settle for the borders that we inherited. But we would still pursue continental political, economic and legal integration. Rather than form

nations that looked ever backward into history with a dangerous nostalgia, we chose to look forward to a greatness none of our many nations and peoples had ever known. We chose to follow the rules of the OAU and the United Nations Charter not because our borders satisfied us but because we wanted something greater forged in peace. We believe that all states formed from empires that have collapsed or retreated have many peoples in them yearning for integration with peoples in neighbouring states. This is normal and understandable. After all, who does not want to be joined to their brethren and to make common purpose with them?

However, Kenya rejects such a yearning from being pursued by force. We must complete our recovery from the embers of dead empires in a way that does not plunge us back into new forms of domination and oppression. We rejected irredentism and expansionism on any basis, including racial, ethnic, religious or cultural factors. We reject it again today. Kenya registers its strong concern and opposition to the recognition of Donetsk and Luhansk as independent states.

We further strongly condemn the trend — in the last few decades — of powerful states, including members of this Security Council, breaching International Law with little regard.

Multilateralism lies on its deathbed tonight. It has been assaulted, as it has been by other powerful states in the recent past.

We call on all member states to stand behind the Secretary General in asking him to rally us to a standard defending multilateralism. We also call on him to bring his good offices to bear to help the concerned parties resolve situation by peaceful means.

Let me conclude by reaffirming Kenya's respect for the territorial integrity of Ukraine within its internationally recognised borders.

I thank you

LITHUANIA

Gabrielius Landsbergis, Minister of Foreign AffairsSpeech on behalf of the Baltic States at the UN Security Council meeting
on the situation in Ukraine

22.09.2022

Madam President,

I have the honour to deliver this statement on behalf of the Baltic States – Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania.

The major reason we meet today is that the permanent member of the Security Council, Russia, is openly threatening security and the rules-based global order – the very cause this Council was created for. Just a year ago, Russia was sowing lies and distrust, now it is sowing chaos and death. Day by day Russia defies the principles of the United Nations and has already become a synonym of brutality, state-run terrorism and genocide.

At this very moment, the international community cannot and should not turn away. Yesterday we all woke up to one more Putin's attempt to escalate aggression. By announcing mobilization he now has waged the war against his own people. Against the people, who meant to be the future of the country but are turned into the weapons of colonial past. Sowing fear, blackmailing, manipulating are the very few weapons he has left with. Sowing scare is his only tactics.

But we shall fear not. We shall meet Putin's desperate sabre-rattling with calm and resolve. Condemnation alone will not end these crimes. It is imperative that the international organisations use all of their resources to bring Russia's atrocities to the public light and on the charge-sheets of international justice. It is our duty to bring Putin to justice. The special tribunal to address the crime of Russia's aggression against Ukraine must be established. Thus, if international organizations will stand up for justice half as strong as Ukraine stands up for universal values, peace will prevail and justice will prevail.

Madam President,

Russia's war against Ukraine has far-reaching consequences beyond Europe. Ukraine is one of the major exporters of wheat, corn and sunflower oil. Thus we shall make it very clear: the shortage of food is due to the Russia's aggression against Ukraine and due to blockade of the Ukrainian ports. And NOT because of the internationally imposed sanctions. And, as if, the charge sheet was not full enough, the Moscow regime, has now pressed the button of nuclear threats, knowing, that we all know that consequences of the disaster in Zaporizhzhia may be potentially worse than Chernobyl or Fukushima. But we shall fear not. We shall use all the power of international community to demand from Russia the unconditional withdrawal of its military from Zaporizhzhia.

LITHUANIA

Madam President,

When we say Ukraine, we mean true courage and unbeatable resilience. Ukraine fights for every principle UN stands for. Ukraine fights for everyone of us.

Therefore, Madam President,

I call on this Council – do not fear to act, fear of your doubt and indifference. I call on every State – we still have a chance to preserve peace and security by taking right decisions to defend the rules-based international order. I call on the entire international community – accountability matters and justice cannot be escaped. This is the momentum, when we have the chance to decide in what world we want to wake-up tomorrow.

And just before I go, I want to remind that it is not only Russia that shall be held accountable. The regime of Belarus shall be on the charge sheet too.

Slava Ukraini! [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine!]

I thank you.

Gabrielius Landsbergis**Statement on the occasion of the Resistance Day to Occupation
of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol**26.02.2024

On February 26, on the occasion of the Resistance Day to Occupation of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the City of Sevastopol, together with Ukraine and its people, we say loudly to the whole world: “Crimea is Ukraine!”

Ten years ago, when Russian occupying forces appeared in Crimea as the so-called “Little Green Men” and started to seize buildings, critical infrastructure and military facilities of the Autonomous Republic of Crimea and the city of Sevastopol. We then urged the international community not to deceive themselves and call this act a true name. Both then and now, we condemned Russia’s occupation and illegal annexation of Ukraine’s Crimean peninsula as a gross violation of the fundamental norms of international law, as well as Ukraine’s independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity.

As this year marks ten years of the occupation and annexation of Crimea, we are reminded of more than 50 years of Soviet occupation and annexation of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia and other states. We stress the importance of the policy of non-recognition of the unlawful annexation of the Crimean Peninsula and other territories of Ukraine and our resolve to help Ukraine restore the country’s territorial integrity and sovereignty. All decisions of Russia’s central government and occupation administrations with respect to Crimea and other territories of Ukraine occupied by Russia are null and void. They do not now and will not create any legal consequences in the future after Ukraine regains its sovereignty in these territories.

We stand in solidarity with the Crimean Tatars and other inhabitants of the Crimean Peninsula and other territories of Ukraine occupied by Russia, who are resisting the occupation and are facing repression as a result. We urge Russia to immediately release all political prisoners and civilian hostages, as well as to comply with the norms of international humanitarian law regarding the treatment of the population of occupied territories, not to violate human rights, and to guarantee their fundamental rights and freedoms.

We call on international organisations to actively raise the issue of the occupation and illegal annexation of Crimea, to participate in the work of the International Crimea Platform, to help Ukraine in every way to restore its sovereignty on the Crimean peninsula and in the entire territory of Ukraine recognised by the international community.

We demand that Russia should immediately cease its aggression against Ukraine and withdraw its forces from the Autonomous Republic of Crimea, the city of Sevastopol,

LITHUANIA

and other occupied and illegally annexed territories of Ukraine so that peace and security could be restored throughout Ukraine.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine began 10 years ago in Crimea. It must end with the liberation of Crimea and other territories occupied by Russia.

POLAND

Mateusz Morawiecki, Prime Minister

Appeal to EU Leaders and Societies

7.03.2022

Ladies and gentlemen, representatives of the free world,

More than one million refugees have arrived in Poland since the beginning of Russia's aggression against Ukraine. One million people who are fleeing the missiles and bullets with which Russia has been destroying their homes and cities for over a week. One million people who have found shelter and assistance in our country since the first days of the war.

So far, there has been no need to establish large refugee camps in Poland. Instead, the Polish people have opened their hearts and doors to those fleeing the war in Ukraine. The refugees are being hosted by Polish families. Accommodation and meals are also being provided by parishes, NGOs, local authorities, and the government. Today, all Polish people are proving what true solidarity is, and I want to thank them for that.

This is the largest migration crisis in Europe since World War II. We need a grassroots approach to this situation and this is what Poland is doing:

- today, the government adopted a law regulating the status of the refugees and the provision of necessary aid;
- we are also creating a fund dedicated to financing this support.

The number of refugees fleeing Putin will only increase—today, Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe are bearing the greatest burden in organising humanitarian aid. However, we must remember that Ukraine is fighting not only for itself but for the whole of Europe, for our freedom and our future. That is why I appeal today to all leaders and citizens of the European Union—this is our common cause and our shared responsibility. Together as a community we must help the war refugees. Poland and other countries bordering Ukraine have already taken this step.

We are facing decisions at the EU level that will systematically resolve this issue. Europe's moral strength is being put to the test. Therefore, let us stand together, let us not make Ukraine wait any longer. The time has come when Europe must prove that it is a continent of peace and freedom. We have to demonstrate that we are able to defend these values. Let's stop the war, let's save the most vulnerable.

Mateusz Morawiecki

Opening Speech at the Strategic Ark Conference in Warsaw

19.05.2022

I firmly believe that history does not just happen, it is the result of choice. Writing about causes of the first world war, Australian historian Christopher Clark described the politicians of that time as lunatics, as people who were wholly unaware of the consequences of their own actions.

I believe that war is never inevitable, it is always the result of either a conscious decision or a lack thereof. It takes courage to face the truth—the massacre in Bucha, the murder of civilians in Irpin, the hecatomb in Mariupol—all these events should wake us from our geopolitical slumber and cause us to cast off our old delusions. But, is that enough? I hear there are attempts to allow Putin to somehow save face in the international arena, but how can you save something that has been utterly disfigured?

Today, with good reason, we are trying to understand the dynamics of the revival of Russian imperialism and perhaps even its totalitarianism, but we must also be ready to take a good look in the mirror and answer questions about our own identity and strategy in a world once again filled with uncertainty.

I would like to thank the Polish Institute of International Affairs for organising this meeting in Warsaw. It is hard to find a more appropriate place to talk about the future of the West: 100 years ago, a battle took place on the outskirts of Warsaw, which shaped the world order for the following two decades. Now, the battle for Ukraine may decide the future of the next 100 years.

The paradox of this war is that if Ukraine wins, it will be the first and foremost her victory, but if she loses, it will not be so much her defeat as defeat for us all and the end of the world as we know it. This is why I make such an unequivocal urge for the isolation of Russian president.

Yes, diplomacy requires dialogue, but you cannot negotiate with terrorists. Criminals must be brought to justice and their ideology—the ideology of Russkiy mir—must be vanquished.

Ladies and gentlemen, at the inception of geopolitics, Poland was recognised as a heartland, a country of strategic importance for the whole of Europe. Whoever rules the heart rules the whole of Europe. Today, the heart is not only to be found in Poland but in Ukraine, the Baltic states, and all of the Central and Eastern Europe.

Our quite special position in Europe means that we cannot only be its heart but also its conscience. For us, the evils of the 20th century are not merely distant history, but still a living memory. Too many times we witnessed the turmoil of war and too often we saw

its horrors to now ignore the warning signs. Credible deterrence is essential—Russia can only be deterred by our unity and military capabilities and hard sanctions, not by phone calls and conversations with Putin, but by military aid to Ukraine and strengthening NATO’s Eastern Flank.

United we are much stronger than Russia. Putin is not the madman that some claim him to be—he knows that the only way to defeat the West is to divide it; therefore, as a counter-offensive, we must build a new unity. Putin’s expenditure requires a quick victory. Ukraine took away this chance from him, but he still counts on being able to survive their political and economic gains. This must be rendered impossible by a united West.

Russia should be punished politically for attacking the European security system of which it was a co-creator. It is not enough to say that the NATO-Russia Founding Act is already dead in letter, we must officially terminate this act and also NordStream 1 should be abandoned as soon as possible.

But that that is still not enough. Permanent allied bases should be established in the countries of the Eastern Flank. Poland is ready to build such bases, which would station Allied troops on a permanent basis. Russia needs to know that we will not cede even one inch of NATO territory.

I consider Sweden and Finland joining NATO a significant strengthening of peace and security in Europe and a serious defeat of the Kremlin. And, I want to make it clear that in the event of an attack on Sweden and Finland during their accession process, Poland will come to their aid.

We must also be aware that NATO enlargement to include Sweden and Finland is a political commitment of the entire transatlantic community to Ukraine. It is the defenders of Mariupol, Kharkiv and Kyiv who opened the door to NATO enlargement with their heroic struggle. These doors must remain open to them as well—to the Ukrainians.

Finally, a word on economics. For years, Poland has warned its allies that Russia could take advantage of Europe’s dependence on supplies of Russian natural resources, especially oil and gas, to further its imperial aspirations. Let me remind you that as early as 2008, Poland proposed the creation of an “energy NATO” in Europe to eliminate the threat of Russian energy blackmail.

The proposal in 2008 was rejected. Today, we know that this was to make the European free market more competitive by means of lower energy costs obtained by preferential prices from Russia. If I know anything about free market competition, such a mechanism should never have had anything to do with it. It turned out that Poland was right about Russia’s intentions.

POLAND

Fortunately, we implemented our own strategy and we did not believe the assurances that Russia would always be a reliable partner in energy policy. We managed to diversify our energy sources and today, we can help the entire region.

By waging war with Ukraine, Russia is using energy to raise the cost of providing Ukraine with aid and generating inflation—we must get this weapon out of her hands. The economy is the other front in the struggle against Russia. Ukrainian soldiers hold the first front—with our help they are overcoming Russian military potential. We must win on the other front and break Russia's economic potential.

Ladies and gentlemen, we must remember that it is not enough to win the war, we must also not lose the peace. We must make a pact that Russia will never again threaten peace in Europe and that the price of maintaining it will be paid by those who do not belong to the EU and NATO.

The victory of freedom and solidarity over imperialism, nationalism, and colonialism must be our collective achievement—reviving the community of the West. And during martial law in Poland, we proclaimed that there is no freedom without solidarity. Today, I believe that there will be no West without that free and victorious Ukraine.

Andrzej Duda, President
 Speech to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
 22.05.2022

Volodymyr, Dear Friend,

How can I speak now when I am almost overcome with emotion?

Thank you from the bottom of my heart,

Volodymyr,

Let me thank you on behalf of Rzeszów, its inhabitants, on behalf of the Podkarpacie region, the entire borderland stretch with Ukraine, on behalf of the people of that region, on behalf of all Poles. Thank you so much for those wonderful words. Thank you from the bottom of my heart!

Shtshe ne vmerla Ukrainy y slava y vola, [read in Ukrainian: Ukraine's freedom has not yet perished, nor has her glory,]

Shtshe nam, bratchiya Ukraintsy, usmyhnetsiya dola. [read in Ukrainian: Upon us, fellow Ukrainians, fate shall smile once more.]

Jeszcze Polska nie zginęła, [read in Polish: Poland has not yet perished]

kiedy my żyjemy, [read in Polish: So long as we still live.]

co nam obca przemoc wzięła, [read in Polish: What the foreign force has taken from us,]

szablą odbierzemy. [read in Polish: We shall with sabre retrieve.]

Distinguished President, Dear Friend, Volodymyr,

Honourable Chairman,

Ladies and Gentlemen of the Verkhovna Rada,

Ladies and Gentlemen, Dear Guests, Dear Ukrainian Friends!

I am today in a beautiful proud city of Kyiv, the capital of free, independent, democratic Ukraine, which for almost 90 days has been putting up heroic resistance to barbaric aggression. I was here also on 23 February, just a few hours before Russian invasion began. I was there to support Ukraine and its people at an extremely difficult time, and to assure you that Poland would never leave Ukraine alone. I was also here just over one month ago with the Presidents of the Baltic states – Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia - your country's friends of long standing, to discuss tangible means of assistance once to you.

But at the time of that visit in Kyiv in the first half of April, I also visited Borodyanka and Irpin. I saw the traces of crime with my own eyes. I saw the enormity of human misery. I saw suffering. I saw anguish, I saw houses demolished, I saw unspeakable

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tragedy of your people. I know what atrocious deeds were perpetrated in Bucha, and in other places by barbaric invaders.

They must be held accountable for what they have done before international tribunals! This is an absolute must if the world is to be a just world! If the world is genuinely to be free!

But despite the widespread devastation, despite most horrible crimes, despite the great suffering that the Ukrainian people experience each day, the Russian invaders have never managed to break you. They have never succeeded. And, I trust, they will never succeed.

And I want to say it forcefully: the free world today has the face of Ukraine!

As President of the Republic of Poland, I have the honour of addressing you – representatives of Ukrainian people – in the Ukrainian Parliament, in the place where the heart of free, independent and democratic Ukraine beats. This is a distinct privilege and honour. I take it as a generous gesture of friendship towards Poland and the Polish people, something I appreciate wholeheartedly. Thank you, Friends.

Honourable Deputies, Distinguished Guests,
but first, and foremost,
Volodymyr, Distinguished President,
Honourable Chairman!

By the works of history Ukraine and Poland have a unique political opportunity ahead of them as two kindred nations from the same part of Europe.

Mr President, Volodymyr!

You have pointed out yourself that together we are more than 80 million people strong and that together we are more powerful. We must not waste this opportunity.

Dear Ukrainian Friends!

I would like to let you know that your loved Ones: spouses, parents, children, grandchildren, those millions of people who had to leave Ukraine, fleeing the tragedy of war, also to Poland – are not refugees in our country. They are our guests. I assure you that they are safe in Polish homes while you are fighting with such bravery to defend your country's independence. They will be safe to return to their home country once you have defeated the Russian occupiers, I firmly believe this to be the case.

By a unique paradox, such a great evil that has been inflicted by the invaders on Ukraine – has unleashed on the other side such great good. I trust the goodness, the friendships made between millions of Poles and Ukrainians will mean we will be good neighbours forever now. This is a great historic opportunity and the great historic breakthrough.

Mr. President, Volodymyr

Mr Chairman of the Verkhovna Rada!

I am standing here before the Verkhovna Rada as the President of Poland to express our thanks, I stress: I stand to express our thanks to you. So far you have been thanking us. You say that Poland has opened its borders for 3.5 million Ukrainian refugees and became home to more than 2 million. It is true. You say that Poland has supplied Ukraine with huge numbers of tanks, armoured vehicles, missile launchers, weapons, munitions worth almost US\$ 2 billion and that Poland keeps telling others that Ukraine must have the support of the free world. That is true.

You say that Poland comes to assistance and has not been intimidated by Russian threats from Moscow. It is also true. You say that Poland has opened its borders and has given Ukrainians the same rights as Poles and has admitted your children to its schools. This is also true.

However, we are not the heroes. It is You who are the heroes.

I am saying this with a sense of pride: Poland offered Ukraine support, because we believed in you, and we still believe in you. Many months ahead of the outbreak of the war I was sure that Ukraine would put up effective resistance to Russia; that it will be like a protagonist of the poem written by your illustrious Ivan Franko; ‘*dukh shtshylo tylo rve do boyiu, rve za postup, shtshastyai voliou*’.

Radosław Sikorski, Minister of Foreign Affairs

Response to the statement by Russian ambassador at the UN Security Council meeting about maintenance of peace and security of Ukraine

23.02.2024.

I associate myself with the words of Minister Kuleba of Ukraine and my colleagues from the European Union.

I am amazed at the tone and the content of the presentation by the Russian Ambassador. I believe it would be useful for me to correct the record.

Ambassador Nebenzia has called Kyiv the clients of the West. Actually, Kyiv is fighting to be independent of everyone. He calls it the “criminal Kyiv regime”. In fact, Ukraine has a democratically elected Government. He calls them Nazis. The President is Jewish, the Defence Minister is Muslim, and they have no political prisoners.

He said that Ukraine was wallowing in corruption. Alexei Navalny documented how honest and full of probity his own country is. The Ambassador blamed the war on United States neocolonialism. In fact, it is Russia that tried to exterminate Ukraine in the nineteenth century, and then again under the Bolsheviks. This is the third attempt. He said that we are prisoners of Russophobia. Phobia means irrational fear. Yet we are being threatened almost every day by the former President of Russia and by Putin propagandists with nuclear annihilation. I put to members that it is not irrational when Russia threatens us. We trust it.

He said that we are denying Russia’s security interests. That is not true. We only started re-arming ourselves when Russia started invading its neighbours. He even said that Poland attacked Russia during the Second World War. What is he talking about? It was the Soviet Union that attacked Poland, together with Nazi Germany, on 17 September 1939. They even held a joint victory parade on 22 September 1939.

He said that Russia has always only beaten back aggression. What were Russian troops doing at the gates of Warsaw in August 1920? Were they on a topographical excursion? No, the truth is that, for every time that Russia has been invaded, it has invaded others 10 times. He said that this is a perfidious proxy war by the West. My advice is not to fall into the “Western trap”. Russia should withdraw its troops to the international border and avoid this Western plot.

He also said that there was an illegal coup d’état in Kyiv in 2014. I was there. There was no coup. President Yanukovich murdered 100 of his compatriots, and he was removed from office by a democratically elected Ukrainian Parliament, including his own party — the Party of Regions.

Finally, he said that we, the West, are somehow trying to persuade people that Russia can be beaten. Russia did not win the Crimean War. It did not win the Russo-Japanese war. It did not win the First World War. It did not win the Battle of Warsaw. It did not win in Afghanistan. And it did not win the Cold War. But there is good news. After each failure, there were reforms.

Such demagoguery is unworthy of a permanent member of the Security Council. But what the Ambassador has achieved is to remind us why we resisted Soviet domination and of what Ukraine is resisting now. They failed to subjugate us then, they will fail to subjugate Ukraine and us now.

SLOVAKIA

Zuzana Čaputova, President
Speech to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine
31.05.2022

Dear Mr Speaker of the Verkhovna Rada,
Dear Members of the Verkhovna Rada,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

This morning I visited Irpin' and Borodyanka and saw the destruction caused by the Russian army. Only one question came to mind. What right does anyone have to harm you this way? By what right? There is no rational answer to this question.

If everything had gone according to Vladimir Putin's plan, today your country would be under the administration of an occupation army, and a puppet government controlled by the Kremlin would govern from Kyiv. But Vladimir Putin's plan has failed.

Instead, I am addressing you, the representatives of the Ukrainian people, who have been elected in free and democratic elections. I am speaking to the great nation of a great country.

The ruins which I saw in the suburbs of your capital are the tragic souvenirs of Putin's fantasy. A fantasy about a world which exists only in the minds of those who do not believe in an individual's freedom. Of those who do not believe in the right of nations to choose their own direction and their own destiny. A fantasy that is dangerous not only for Ukraine, but for the entire democratic world.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

The reality is clear. Russia has been waging war against Ukraine for a long time. The conflict did not start by the barbarian missile attacks in that gloomy February morning in 2022. It has started long before that, by the massive propaganda denying your statehood, your national and cultural identity, your language. The dehumanization of Ukrainians started long before Russian soldiers committed war crimes in Bucha and Mariupol. Long before the little green men and "ichtamnety" invaded Crimea and Donbas in 2014.

But the reality also is that in those eight years we in the West did not do enough to stop Moscow. Many thought that Crimea would be enough for the Kremlin, that Russia would be satisfied with parts of Donbas. Slovaks are very familiar with such scenario. Before the outbreak of the Second World War, Adolf Hitler sent a message to the world that a free and democratic Czechoslovakia was not part of his plan for a new Europe. He aggressively took over our territory while our allies in the West closed their eyes. They thought that by signing the Munich Agreement they had sown peace; but they harvested shame. They had not prevented the war, which destroyed millions of lives including in my and your country.

SLOVAKIA

Since the 24th of February it is obvious that Putin is not interested in a piece of Donbas or Crimea. He wants to destroy Ukraine because you are different. You have built an open society and economy. You have strengthened the rule of law and have fought corruption. And your way of life was a clear evidence that you no longer want to have anything to do with homo sovieticus. After all, as one of Putin's own propagandists stated, "you are anti-Russia".

Dear Ukrainians,

Today you are defending your country, your lives, your future and your right to decide autonomously about your future. You are defending the rights and rules which have guaranteed decades of peace on our continent. The rules, which the Russian Federation has flagrantly trampled on. By doing so, you are also defending us and we thank you for that. Your war is a just and defensive one. The entire democratic world stands by your side. Not only in words, which you have been hearing for too long. Now it is time for action.

As your neighbour, we feel the direct consequences of the Russian aggression against you. We have not closed our eyes. We are among the countries, which have provided the most assistance on a per capita basis. We cannot take up arms to fight by your side, but I want to tell you what we can do and what we are doing.

First, we will take care of those of you who had to flee the war, of your women and children. For as long as they need it. I am proud of the powerful wave of solidarity shown by my compatriots. In the first days of the full-scale invasion, I welcomed your citizens at our border and I saw the consequences of the hell that Putin has unleashed on you. I saw fear and pain, but also a great resolve in the eyes of those to whom we gave safe refuge. I want to assure you that fear is disappearing, that we are helping to soothe the pain and that the resolve continues. Your close ones, wives, mothers, grandmothers and children are thinking about you and are praying for you. They believe that they will soon be able to return to a free country.

Second, we know that packages of medicines and food supplies alone will not expel the occupants from your country. Your defenders need military supplies and equipment. This is why we have helped and will continue helping in this regard too. Recently it was the S-300 missile system, demining systems and ammunition, soon it will be Zuzana howitzers. And in conversations with our partners and allies, we are clear that what Ukraine needs is not only humanitarian aid but also military assistance.

Third – we will not keep our mouth shut. We will not be quiet when Russia commits war crimes in plain sight. Today I saw what Russian invaders left behind in the Kyiv suburbs. Already a month ago, Slovak forensic experts and police technicians began helping your prosecutors and experts. I know that documenting Russian crimes in Ukraine will not

return your family and friends. But it will give you the opportunity to tell the whole world what had happened. And to prosecute those who caused it.

Fourth – we will help you with the export of grain and other goods which Putin’s regime has cynically confiscated or blocked in Ukrainian ports. He hopes to break you economically even more, and that the threat of a global food shortage will weaken the resolve of the free world to sanction Russian aggression. But in fact, he has achieved the opposite – today the whole world can see who is the aggressor and who has been attacked. Our resolve has not weakened, on the contrary.

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen,

Many of our mothers and fathers still remember the invasion of the Soviet army of Czechoslovakia in 1968. Tanks were sent in to interrupt our efforts to humanize and democratize a totalitarian regime. Back then, the entire civilized world condemned the invasion and demonstrations took place in many big cities. But the world did very little to change something... Demonstrations took place even on the Red Square in Moscow, where the “brave eight” protested against the occupation, with the words “for your freedom and our freedom”. Today we are not only standing up for your freedom on squares of our cities; we are also helping and we will continue to do so. So the same mistake, which was made in 1968 is not made again.

We are with you and you are close to us. Over one hundred years ago, at the beginning of the First World War, the first Czech Legion, later joined by the Slovaks, had their swearing-in ceremony not far from here, at Sofiska Square. They were accommodated at St. Michael’s Monastery and they trained at St. Vladimir’s Hill. Your capital was the base for our Czechoslovak resistance, although at the time, the great powers did not take it seriously. And do you know what happened? Under excellent command, that small legion grew into an army of legionaries. From 1918 to 1919 they took over the entire TransSiberian Railway, keeping in check the Soviet Russia in check and earning an international respect for it. Today your defenders and all of you have our utmost respect.

Dear Ukrainians,

I believe that your country will win this war and Russia will be held accountable for its enormous mistakes. Those calling for stopping military assistance to Ukraine are calling for your capitulation. Those who think that a ceasefire is possible without the withdrawal of the Russian soldiers has not learned the lessons of 1938, 1968 or 2014. And to those calling for the need to allow Vladimir Putin to save face, I recommend they read one of his biographies. The title of the book is The Man without a Face

Dear Members of the Parliament,

Long debates about whether Ukraine should receive the status of a candidate for accession to the European Union are underway. To us and to you, the answer is

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absolutely clear. Ukraine belongs to the European Union and will be a part of it. Slovakia and I personally will do everything to ensure that it happens as soon as possible; I will continue to talk about it with other leaders. We will also help with your reconstruction. Once this nightmare is over, Ukraine will blossom again. Just as today flowers are already growing in the ruined houses in Borodyanka and Bucha.

We should never negotiate out of fear, but we should never fear to negotiate. We all want peace, and you, Ukrainian men and women want it the most. Slovakia will support all of your efforts aimed at peaceful resolution of the conflict that Russia has unleashed. But only under terms determined by you, the Ukrainian people, who have been attacked and are heroically defending itself.

We will continue to support you so that your position in these negotiations is even stronger. As your famous poet Taras Shevchenko said: “Boritesyapoborete! Vam Boh pomahaє! Za vas pravda, za vas slava, i voľa sviataja”. [read in Ukrainian: “Struggle on—and be triumphant! God Himself will aid you; At your side fight truth and glory, Right and holy freedom”].

Ščyro Ďjakuju [read in Ukrainian: Thank you so much].

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Boris Johnson, Prime Minister

Statement to the House of Commons on Ukraine

24.02.2022

Mr Speaker,

I have just come from a meeting of G7 leaders, joined by Secretary General Stoltenberg of NATO, and with permission I will update the House on our response to President Putin's onslaught against a free and sovereign European nation.

Shortly after 4am this morning, I spoke to President Zelenskyy of Ukraine as the first missiles struck his beautiful and innocent country and its brave people, and I assured him of the unwavering support of the United Kingdom. And I can tell the House that at this stage, Ukrainians are offering a fierce defence of their families and their country and I know that every Hon Member will share my admiration for their resolve.

Earlier today, Putin delivered another televised address and offered the absurd pretext that he sought the "demilitarisation and denazification of Ukraine". In fact he is hurling the might of his military machine against a free and peaceful neighbour, in breach of his own explicit pledge and every principle of civilised behaviour between states, spurning the best efforts of this country and our allies to avoid bloodshed. For this, Putin will stand condemned in the eyes of the world and of history: he will never be able to cleanse the blood of Ukraine from his hands. And though the UK and our allies tried every avenue for diplomacy until the final hour, I am driven to conclude that Putin was always determined to attack his neighbour, no matter what we did. Now we see him for what he is: a bloodstained aggressor who believes in imperial conquest.

I am proud that Britain did everything within our power to help Ukraine prepare for this onslaught, and we will do our utmost to offer more help as our brave friends defend their homeland. Our Embassy took the precaution on 18 February of relocating from Kyiv to the city of Lviv in western Ukraine, where our Ambassador, Melinda Simmons, continues to work with the Ukrainian authorities and to support British nationals.

Now we have a clear mission: diplomatically, politically, economically – and eventually, militarily – this hideous and barbaric venture of Vladimir Putin must end in failure. At the G7 meeting this afternoon, we agreed to work in unity to maximise the economic price that Putin will pay for his aggression. And this must include ending Europe's collective dependence on Russian oil and gas that has served to empower Putin for too long. So I welcome again Chancellor Scholz's excellent decision to halt the certification of Nord Stream 2.

Mr Speaker, countries that together comprise about half of the world economy are now engaged in maximising the pressure, economic pressure, on one which makes

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up a mere 2 per cent. For our part, today the UK is announcing the largest and most severe package of economic sanctions that Russia has ever seen. With new financial measures we are taking new powers to target Russian finance. In addition to the banks we have already sanctioned this week, today – in concert with the United States – we are imposing a full asset freeze on VTB. More broadly, these powers will enable us to totally exclude Russian banks from the UK financial system, which is of course by far the largest in Europe, stopping them from accessing Sterling and clearing payments through the UK. And with around half of Russia's trade currently in US dollars and sterling, I am pleased to tell the House the United States is taking similar measures.

These powers will also enable us to ban Russian state and private companies from raising funds in the UK, banning dealing with their securities and making loans to them. We will limit the amount of money that Russian nationals will be able to deposit in their UK bank accounts.

And sanctions will also be applied to Belarus for its role in the assault on Ukraine. Overall we will be imposing asset freezes on over more 100 new entities and individuals on top of the hundreds we've already announced. This includes all the major manufacturers that support Putin's war machine. Furthermore, we will also ban Aeroflot from the UK.

Next – on top of these financial measures and in full concert with the United States and the EU – we will introduce new trade restrictions and stringent export controls, similar to those they, in the US are implementing. We will bring forward new legislation to ban the export of all dual-use items to Russia, including a range of high-end and critical technological equipment and components in sectors including electronics, telecommunications, and aerospace. Legislation to implement this will be laid early next week. These trade sanctions will constrain Russia's military-industrial and technological capabilities for years to come.

We are bringing forward measures on unexplained wealth orders from the Economic Crime Bill to be introduced before the House rises for Easter. And we will set out further detail before Easter on the range of policies to be included in the full Bill in the next session – including on reforms to Companies House and a register of overseas property ownership. We will set up a new dedicated 'Kleptocracy Cell' in the National Crime Agency to target sanctions evasion and corrupt Russian assets hidden in the UK and that means oligarchs in London who have nowhere to hide.

And Mr Speaker, I know this House will have great interest in the potential of cutting out Russia from SWIFT, And I can confirm – as I have always said - that nothing is off the table. But for all of these measures to be successful it is vital we have the unity of our partners, the unity we in the G7 and other fora.

And Mr Speaker Russian investors are already delivering their verdict on the wisdom of Putin's actions and so far today, Russian stocks are down by as much as 45 percent, wiping \$250 billion from their value, in the biggest one day decline on record. Sberbank – Russia's biggest lender – is down by as much as 45 percent, and Gazprom down by as much as 39 percent, while the rouble has plummeted to record lows against dollar.

We will continue on a remorseless mission to squeeze Russia from the global economy piece by piece, day by day and week by week. And we will of course use Britain's position in every international forum to condemn the onslaught against Ukraine, and we will counter the Kremlin's blizzard of lies and disinformation by telling the truth about Putin's war of choice and war of aggression.

And we will work with our allies on the urgent need to protect other European countries that are not members of NATO and could become targets of Putin's Playbook of subversion and aggression.

And we will resist any creeping temptation to accept what Putin is doing today as a fait accompli. There can be no creeping normalisation, not now, not in months to come, not in years.

We must strengthen NATO's defences still further, so today I called for a meeting of NATO leaders which will take place tomorrow. And I will be convening the countries that contribute to the Joint Expeditionary Force, which is led by the United Kingdom and comprises both NATO and non-NATO members.

Last Saturday, I warned that this invasion would have global economic consequences and this morning the oil price has risen strongly. The Government will do everything possible to safeguard our own people from the repercussions for the cost of living, and we of course stand ready to protect our country from any threats, including in cyberspace.

Above all, the House will realise the hard and heavy truth that we now live in a continent where an expansionist power, deploying one of the world's most formidable military machines, is trying to redraw the map of Europe in blood, and conquer an independent state by force of arms, and it is vital for the safety of every nation that Putin's squalid venture should ultimately fail and be seen to fail. However long it takes, that will be the steadfast and unflinching goal of the United Kingdom, I hope of every Hon Member of this House, and of every one of our great allies, certain that together we have the power and the will to defend the cause of peace and justice, as we have always done.

And I say to the people of Russia, whose President has just authorised an onslaught against a fellow Slavic people, I cannot believe that this horror is being done in your name or that you really want the pariah status that these actions will bring to the Putin regime.

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And to our Ukrainian friends in this moment of agony, I say we are with you, and we are on your side. Your right to choose your own destiny is a right that the United Kingdom and our allies will always defend. And in that spirit I join you in saying slava Ukraini [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

And I commend this statement to the House.

Boris Johnson

Remarks at joint press conference with Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Kyiv

24.08.2022

Thank you very much Volodymyr and thank you to the people of Ukraine for the incredible honour that you have done me which is a recognition of the efforts of the UK.

When you rang me at 4 in the morning on that grim day in February and you told me the news that we had been dreading that Putin had been so insane as to invade a sovereign European country, I told you then that we were shoulder to shoulder with you and that is as true today as it was in that horrific moment. And I can also tell you that when we met in the high security room in Downing Street to try to understand what was happening, we were filled with foreboding. We just did not see how this innocent and beautiful country could repel an attack by more than 100 Battalion Tactical Groups, when the suffering and the casualties would be so immense. But you did.

And like one of those indomitable Ukrainian boxers for which this country is justly famous, you came off the ropes and you hit him with an upper-cut that sent Putin's armies reeling from Kyiv and then a hook to drive them from Kharkiv, And it became ever clearer to the world that he had fatally underestimated the grit, the will, and above all the price that you were willing to pay to defend the country you love. And I salute the heroic dead, I salute the families of the bereaved and the injured, the emergency services who have been called time after time to the scenes of Putin's atrocities. I salute the bravery of the ordinary people of Ukraine who have just got on with their lives. The teachers, the students, the children.

In our country today young people are getting their grades for their exams and of course it has been a tough time for them, because we've all had to cope with the pandemic. But I ask them all to think of the children of Ukraine, two thirds of whom have been driven from their homes, two thirds, and who have seen nearly a fifth of their schools destroyed or damaged. And yet working by candlelight or in makeshift classrooms, 7,500 of them have achieved the highest possible grades. And it is our collective mission to ensure those brilliant students grow up to use their qualifications to achieve their dreams in a peaceful, prosperous and independent Ukraine. And I believe they will, because out of the ashes of your towns and cities, out of the monstrous scars left by Putin's missiles, something beautiful is blooming, a flower that the whole world can see and admire and that is the unconquerable will of the Ukrainians to resist.

And that was what Putin failed to understand. He simply had no idea how much Ukrainians love this extraordinary country with its rich black soil and magical golden domes, how much they treasure the life, the bustle and the freedom and the Eurovision

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song contest winning cultural dynamism of Ukraine. And just as he fatally underestimated Ukraine, he also underestimated the price the whole world was willing to pay to support Ukraine. We have and we well and even though we must accept after six months of war the price is indeed a high price.

And I have come from a United Kingdom where we are battling inflation that is being driven by the spike in energy prices that is caused by Putin's war. And we face strikes being driven by trade union's bosses who have the ruinous belief that the best way to tackle soaring energy prices is with ever higher wages when that is simply to pour petrol on the flames and of course we are doing everything we can to deal with the pressures people face on their cost of living and to help people through the difficult months ahead. And that is why it is so important for you to know now that we in Britain have the strength and the patience to get through these economic difficulties that have been so recklessly driven and exacerbated by the folly and malevolence of one man, Vladimir Putin.

And like every other European country we are of course working to end our dependence on Russian hydrocarbons and we are building those new nuclear power stations, one a year rather than one every ten years, tens of gigawatts of new wind farms and I can tell you that we in the UK will not for one second give in to Putin's economic blackmail because the people of my country can see with complete clarity what is at stake in Ukraine today.

Yes of course, it is about you and your right to live in peace and freedom and frankly that on its own is enough, but it is also about all of us, all of us who believe in the principles of freedom and democracy and here today now in Ukraine I believe that history is at a turning point and after decades in which democracy has been on the defensive, on the back foot, we have an opportunity to join you in saying no to tyranny, saying no to those who would stifle Ukrainian liberty and independence and we will. And that is why Ukraine will win.

And we also know that if we are paying in our energy bills for the evils of Vladimir Putin, the people of Ukraine are paying for it in their blood and that is why we know that we must stay the course because if Putin were to succeed, then no country on Russia's perimeter would be safe and if Putin succeeds it would be a green light to every autocrat in the world, a signal that that borders can be changed by force and that is why the British House of Commons, all parties, stood as one, to applaud Volodymyr Zelenskyy and to support the military, diplomatic and economic support that we are giving to Ukraine.

And I'm proud that we have already supplied more arms than any other European country, including 6,900 anti tank missiles, 5000 of the NLAWs, 120 armoured vehicles, Starstreak anti aircraft missiles, anti-ship missiles and now the MLRS And today I can tell you that more artillery and more ammunition is on its way and 2000 UAVs and we

are training 10,000 Ukrainian soldiers, alongside our allies, and only the other day I was at Catterick in Yorkshire and I met 400 of your recruits that we are helping to train and these were people from all walks of life, people who weren't soldiers, who had never been to battle before. But the grim reality was that in just a few weeks from now they are heading to that frontline.

And when I listened to their cheerfulness and their courage, I knew Ukraine will win. And in offering this kind of training and equipment, I also want to applaud our friends around the world, in the EU, the Poles, the Baltic countries, the Dutch, the Czechs, the French, the Germans, the Italians, they've been steadfast. But at this juncture it would be right to pay a special tribute to the outstanding global leadership of the United States of America, And let me be clear, I believe this commitment by the United States of \$40 billion in military support, I think \$59 billion all told, has been indispensable to Ukrainian success and I thank Joe Biden and his team for what he is doing and to all our friends I simply say this: we must keep going. WE must show that we have the same strategic endurance as the people of Ukraine.

We know that the coming winter will be tough, and that Putin will manipulate Russian energy supplies to try to torment households across Europe and our first test as friends of Ukraine will be to face down and endure that pressure – to help consumers but also to build up our own supplies and I believe that as we come through this winter, our position will strengthen and with every week that goes by Putin's position will weaken. And that's why now we must continue and intensify our support for Ukraine. The HIMARS the MLRS and all the systems that are proving so effective in Ukrainian hands.

We cannot afford for one moment to relax the sanctions on Putin, and we must keep up the financial and economic support for Ukraine and every day around the world we must fight Putin's lies – because it is his war that is pushing up the price of food and oil and gas, not western sanctions and we must fight any creeping attempt to normalise relations with Putin because it is becoming ever clearer that thanks to the sacrifices of the people of Ukraine, the vaunted Russian offensive in Donbas is failing and therefore this is exactly the moment for your friends to help you strike the Russians just as they begin to wobble.

We know that Putin's troops are tiring, that his losses are colossal, that his supply lines are vulnerable. We can see how tiny his recent advances have become, and how huge the cost in Russian blood and treasure and tragically in the tears of Russian mothers. And we also know that this is not the time to advance some flimsy plan for negotiation with someone who is simply not interested. You can't negotiate with a bear while it's eating your leg, you can't negotiate with a street robber who has you pinned to the floor and

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we don't need to worry about humiliating Putin any more than we would need to worry about humiliating the bear or the robber.

All that matters today is restoring and preserving the sovereign integrity of Ukraine. And on this anniversary, let us remember that glorious day 31 years ago when on an 84 per cent turnout 92 per cent supported independence. And this is now a war for that independence and history teaches us that when a country has a language, an identity, a pride, a love of its traditions, a patriotic feeling that simply grows with every month and year that passes, and when a country of that kind is engaged in a war for its very existence, my friends, that war is only going to end one way.

Ukraine will win, and Britain will be by your side.

You have reminded us of values that the world thought it had forgotten, you have reminded us that freedom and democracy are worth fighting for. I'm proud to count myself a friend of Ukraine, I thank you for the honour that you've done me today, and you can count on me and my country in the years ahead.

Rishi Sunak, Prime Minister

Speech at the Ukraine Recovery Conference

21.06.2023

Good morning, and welcome to the Ukraine Recovery Conference.

Before this terrible war, Ukraine's economy was becoming a huge investment opportunity. It was the breadbasket of Europe, exporting millions of tonnes of food and grain each month. A top five exporter of iron ore and steel. A leader in energy - pushing forward renewables, hydrogen, and electric vehicles. A start up nation, which helped spark names like PayPal, WhatsApp and Revolut with a thriving tech sector, which actually had a record year in 2022.

Because the truth is, that opportunity is still there today. In fact, the war has only proved how much Ukraine has to offer. When I visited Kyiv in November, I saw this for myself. I saw Ukraine's incredible spirit. A spirit, yes of strength and defiance but also of ingenuity and innovation. In a converted office block, I met tech experts – civilian and military who were working together to find new ways to bolster the country's defences. They were networking mobile phones, so that people across Ukraine could download an app which would allow their phone to pick up the sound of Shahed drones and feedback the location so that Ukrainian air defence could track them and shoot them down.

During the winter Russia tried to destroy Ukraine's energy grid. By February over 40% of power generation was down. But now, because of that incredible ingenuity and defiance, Ukraine has got the grid back online and they're even able to start exporting electricity back to Europe. As we've seen in Bakhmut and Mariupol, what Russia cannot take it will seek to destroy.

They want to do the same to Ukraine's economy. And the scale of the challenge is real. The war brought a 29% fall in Ukraine's GDP last year. But just look at the streets of Kyiv. Despite the threat of attack, people are getting on with their lives – and getting on with business. President Zelenskyy's government is determined to drive reforms to become more open, more transparent, and ready for investment. This is a vibrant, dynamic, creative, European country that refuses to be subdued.

So, together with our allies we will maintain our support for Ukraine's defence and for the counter offensive. We will stand with Ukraine for as long as it takes as they continue and to win this war. And we'll also stand with them as they win the peace and harness all of that ingenuity and defiance to build that the future they deserve. The question for us today is what can we do to support this – to fast-track recovery and help Ukraine unleash its potential? It's clear that Russia must pay for the destruction that they've inflicted. So,

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we're working with allies to explore lawful routes to use Russian assets. And on Monday, we published new legislation to allow us to keep sanctions in place until Russia pays up.

But beyond that, we must bring to bear a partnership of governments, international financial institutions, and business leaders - all of us here today to make this happen. The British government will continue to play its full part and I'm proud that today we're announcing a multiyear commitment to support Ukraine's economy. Over three years, we will provide loan guarantees worth \$3 billion. We're also launching a new UK-Ukraine TechBridge to foster investment and talent along with support for green energy and more - all part of a vast collective effort from allies and partners around the world including significant new support from the EU which is also being announced this week. Financial institutions are playing their part. The IMF is putting \$15 billion into Ukraine over four years, as part of a \$115 billion commitment by the G7 and its partners, and institutions like the EBRD are providing seed capital to support private sector-led growth.

Because, above all, we must build a platform for business. Only they can truly crowd-in the innovation and investment that Ukraine needs. And that's why, we're launching the Ukraine Business Compact - for the private sector to pledge their support for Ukraine's recovery and reconstruction. And I am delighted to announce today that over 400 businesses from 38 countries, with a combined market cap of \$4.9 trillion, have now signed up. The City of London has a huge amount to offer - in their deep and liquid capital markets and world-class finance expertise. So, there is no better place to announce today the new London Conference Framework for War Risk Insurance. This is a huge step forward towards helping insurers to underwrite investments into Ukraine - removing one of the biggest barriers and giving investors the confidence, they need to act.

With this and with everything that we do here, we are sending a message. That our support - on the battlefield and beyond - cannot be outlasted and that Ukraine's incredible spirit will prevail. Now, in a moment I'll hand over to my friend President Zelenskyy, but first I'd just like to share something I heard recently. It's about a Ukrainian soldier fighting to defend Bakhmut. He was stationed in an empty house, not far from the frontline surrounded by the destruction of war. When he could snatch a moment of free time, he used it to plant seeds. He was trying to create a plot of vegetables hoping that by the time the homeowners returned they would have begun to grow. What a profound expression of hope.

And, you know, from that house to this hall - we're doing the same thing. We're planting the seeds of Ukraine's future. Today, we can water them and in time the Ukrainian people will harvest them. And now it is my great pleasure to introduce President Zelenskyy - Volodymyr, you have the floor.

Rishi SunakAddress to the Verkhovna Rada of Ukraine after signing
the British-Ukrainian security agreement

12.01.2024

Mr President [Volodymyr Zelenskyy], Mr Prime Minister [Denys Shmyhal], Mr Chairman [Ruslan Stefanchuk], Honourable Members of the Rada...

I come from the world's oldest Parliament to address the world's bravest. And it is an honour to do so. Every Parliamentarian serving in a democratically elected chamber treasures the ideal of freedom. Your courage is defending it. Even as the enemy came within 20 kilometres of this Chamber... with many of you personally targeted... you refused to be daunted. You continued to sit and do your duty - as you have throughout this war. Because this is where you express the sovereignty and independence... ...for which your people are prepared to sacrifice everything. This is where you are keeping alive the cause of democracy... in defiance of the gravest threat we have faced this century. So on behalf of Britain and all your allies: Thank you. Slava Ukraini [read in Ukrainian: Glory to Ukraine].

President Zelensky, you are an inspiration, and, Volodymyr, I am proud to call you a friend. President John F Kennedy said of the great Winston Churchill that he: "Mobilised the English language and sent it into battle." Volodymyr, you have done the same... and English isn't even your first language! No leader this century has done more to unite liberal democracies in the defence of our values. Thank you.

Above all, let me pay tribute to the people of Ukraine. I first came to Ukraine ten years ago, in the year of the Maidan protests. I remember the sense of nervous hope... as Ukraine looked towards a future as a sovereign European democracy. And in each of my visits since this war began... even amidst all the rubble and destruction... the people I've met are more determined than ever to realise that dream. The soldiers who even now fight to the last breath for every inch of ground. The pilots making stunning blows against Russia's Black Sea fleet. The gunners beating impossible odds to defend your skies. The engineers who defeated darkness during the most difficult winter in your history. And the ordinary people of Ukraine, who have endured... more than anyone should ever have to bear. Rockets and bombs deliberately aimed at homes and hospitals, shelters, and schools. Torture, rape, children kidnapped. You have met this depravity with bravery and defiance. With your unique, unbreakable Ukrainian spirit. And all of us in the free world, salute you.

We meet today at a difficult moment in the struggle for Ukraine's freedom. As always during conflict, there will be difficult moments. But we must prepare for this to be a

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long war. But I believe there is hope for us in the echoes of Britain's own history. If 1940 was our finest hour... and Ukraine's was two years ago as you resisted the Russian invasion... then perhaps today is more like 1942. That was a point in the middle of the war... when progress on the battlefield was hard... the defence industry was under severe strain... and populations were becoming weary. It must have been hard to see the light ahead. But they stood firm. And although they did not know it then... for all the setbacks and difficulties that still lay before them... that was the moment the tide began to turn, and victory became assured. I believe that the same will be true of this moment. In the end, history tells us that democracies who endure will always prevail.

Putin cannot understand... that while you can kill individuals and destroy buildings... no army can ever defeat the will of a free people. And that is why Ukraine will win. Think of what you have already achieved. Putin believed he could subjugate Ukraine by force in a matter of weeks. Instead, with every rocket he fires the Ukrainian people become ever more determined... and their sense of nationhood becomes stronger still. Russia's military vastly outnumbers Ukrainian forces. Yet you have already regained half of the occupied territory. You have held the East, reopened vital shipping lanes to help feed the world... and increasingly made Crimea a vulnerability for Russia, not a strength. These victories show: Russia can be beaten in its war of aggression. It's on track to lose nearly half a million men. Putin has faced an attempted coup... been indicted as an international war criminal... presides over an economy severely weakened by sanctions... and has succeeded in persuading countries across Europe... to significantly increase their defence spending. He is now reduced to begging Iran and North Korea for weapons... and desperately sacrificing hundreds of thousands more men... in the hope that Ukraine will yield, or its friends might walk away.

Well, Ukraine will not yield. And the United Kingdom will never walk away. From the very beginning... the British people spontaneously flew the Ukrainian flag – and I tell you that it flies still. They felt moved to show solidarity with people they've never met... In a country most have never visited... Because of our shared faith in freedom, fairness and democracy. We welcomed Ukrainian refugees with open hearts. We trained tens of thousands of their Ukrainian comrades in arms. we led the way in delivering... Helicopters, ships, tanks, and armoured vehicles... Air defences and electronic weapons systems... Planeloads of anti-tank missiles like the NLAWs and Javelins... Storm Shadows to reach behind enemy lines and defend against aggression in the Black Sea. Humanitarian and economic support. And the strongest set of sanctions ever to debilitate Russia's economy. I'm proud that we've provided over £9bn of support so far. But I want to go further still.

Today, President Zelensky and I agreed a new partnership between our two countries... ..designed to last a hundred years or more. Our partnership is about defence and security. It is about the unique ties between our people and cultures. It will build back a better and brighter future for Ukraine. To attract new investment in jobs and homes... To fund English language training for the Ukrainian people... as you make English the language of business and diplomacy. And it will hold Russia accountable for their war crimes. Because Russia must pay to rebuild what they have destroyed. Perhaps above all, it will support Ukraine to complete the historic journey you have chosen... to becoming a free, independent democracy at the heart of Europe.

Ours is the unbreakable alliance: The nezlamni alianz. [read in Ukrainian: Unbreakable alliance].

First, we will help you win the war. Russia thinks that they will outlast us; that our resolve is faltering. It is not. In each of the last two years, we sent you £2.3bn of military aid. This year, we are going to increase that... with the biggest single defence package so far... worth £2.5bn. This package will include: More air defence equipment, more anti-tank weapons, more long-range missiles... Thousands of rounds more ammunition and artillery shells... And training for thousands more soldiers... Now in total, the UK will have provided almost £12bn of aid to Ukraine. So be in no doubt: We are not walking away. Putin will never outlast us. We are here for Ukraine –as long as it takes. But the best way to make sure Ukraine has the weapons it needs... is to help Ukraine to produce those weapons themselves.

So our second action is to work with you to massively increase defence industrial production. I believe this will be a source of huge economic strength and value for Ukraine in the future. So even as the UK donates more equipment... we will help make you the armoury of the free world. British companies like BAE Systems and AMS are already supporting your armed forces from within Ukraine. And we will go further. Starting today with £200m to manufacture thousands of new drones... both here in Ukraine and in the UK. This is the single largest package of drones given to Ukraine by any nation.

Thirdly, today's agreement supports your historic choice to join NATO. Because I believe that Ukraine's rightful place is in NATO. But this isn't just about how NATO benefits Ukraine. It's about how Ukraine benefits NATO. Your understanding of modern war comes not from a textbook but the battlefield. Your armed forces are experienced, innovative, and brave. Ukraine belongs in NATO and NATO will be stronger with Ukraine. Last year's Vilnius Summit made important steps towards membership. And I want us to be even more ambitious at the Washington Summit this June. And we made you a

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solemn promise... along with 30 other countries... to provide new, bilateral security assurances. Today, the UK is the first to deliver on that promise.

President Zelensky and I have just signed a new security agreement. If Russia ever again invades Ukraine, the UK will come to your aid with swift and sustained security assistance. We will provide modern equipment across land, sea, and sky... Sanction Russia's economy... And work closely with allies to do so. You will not have to ask. You will not have to argue for what you need. The UK will be there from the first moment to the last. I believe this is the greatest moment in the history of our relationship. With unprecedented security guarantees... it defines our future as allies, working together for the security of Europe... and sitting side by side among the free countries of the world. In the words of the great Ukrainian poet Taras Shevchenko... you have broken your heavy chains and joined... The family of the free. Because in the end, this is about even more than security. It is about Ukraine's right as an independent nation to determine your own future. And it is about the right of all nations – enshrined in the UN Charter - to determine their own future.

As Churchill said, there are two kinds of nationalism: “The craze for supreme domination by weight or force” – which he called “a danger and a vice”. Or the nationalism that comes from “love of country and readiness to die for country... love of tradition and culture... and the gradual building up... of a social entity dignified by nationhood”. He called this: “the first of virtues”. I can think of no better description of the two sides of this war. Or a better description of the battle that will define our age. Because while this war may have begun in the deluded mind... of a man in thrall to the mirage of a long-dead empire... if Putin wins in Ukraine, he will not stop here.

That's why President Biden, the EU, allies in NATO, the G7 and beyond... have seen the century-defining importance of this fight and they have rallied to your cause. And we cannot – and will not - falter now. Because aid to Ukraine is an investment in our own collective security. Only a Ukrainian victory will deter Putin from attacking others in the future... and prove our enemies wrong... when they say that democracies have neither the patience nor resources for long wars. This is the choice before us. These are the stakes. Waver now – and we embolden not just Putin, but his allies in North Korea, Iran, and elsewhere. Or rally to Ukraine's side and defend our common cause... of democracy over dictatorship, freedom over tyranny, the rule of law over anarchy. That is what you are fighting for.

And to echo Churchill: We must give you the tools – and I know that you will finish the job. Let me conclude with this final thought. On one of the earliest days of the invasion... In the darkness just before the dawn... As Russian bombs fell on Kyiv... President Zelensky stood outside the House with Chimaeras... ...and sent a simple, defiant message to

the world: Miy tut. We are here. Today, as the world asks will your allies waver... Will our resolve weaken... Will our belief in your success falter... My reply is the same: Miy tut. We are here. As a symbol of our nezlamni allianz... [read in Ukrainian: Unbreakable alliance]. I bring you today the United Kingdom's flag... signed by our country's entire Cabinet... to stand here until the day of your victory and beyond... as a sign to the world that we are here... and we will always be with you.

Miy tut. Slava Ukraini. [read in Ukrainian: We are here. Glory to Ukraine].

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Joe Biden, President

Remarks on Russia's Unprovoked and Unjustified Attack on Ukraine

24.02.2022

Sorry to keep you waiting. Good afternoon.

The Russian military has begun a brutal assault on the people of Ukraine without provocation, without justification, without necessity. This is a premeditated attack. Vladimir Putin has been planning this for months, as I've been — as we've been saying all along. He moved more than 175,000 troops, military equipment into positions along the Ukrainian border. He moved blood supplies into position and built a field hospital, which tells you all you need to know about his intentions all along. He rejected every good-faith effort the United States and our Allies and partners made to address our mutual security concerns through dialogue to avoid needless conflict and avert human suffering. For weeks — for weeks, we have been warning that this would happen. And now it's unfolding largely as we predicted.

In the past week, we've seen shelling increase in the Donbas, the region in eastern Ukraine controlled by Russian-backed separatists. The Russian government has perpetrated cyberattacks against Ukraine.

We saw a staged political theater in Moscow — outlandish and baseless claims that Ukraine was — Ukraine was about to invade and launch a war against Russia, that Ukraine was prepared to use chemical weapons, that Ukraine committed a genocide — without any evidence. We saw a flagrant violation of international law in attempting to unilaterally create two new so-called republics on sovereign Ukrainian territory. And at the very moment that the United Nations Security Council was meeting to stand up for Ukraine's sovereignty to stave off invasion, Putin declared his war. Within moments — moments, missile strikes began to fall on historic cities across Ukraine. Then came in the air raids, followed by tanks and troops rolling in.

We've been transparent with the world. We've shared declassified evidence about Russia's plans and cyberattacks and false pretexts so that there can be no confusion or cover-up about what Putin was doing. Putin is the aggressor. Putin chose this war. And now he and his country will bear the consequences.

Today, I'm authorizing additional strong sanctions and new limitations on what can be exported to Russia. This is going to impose severe costs on the Russian economy, both immediately and over time. We have purposefully designed these sanctions to maximize the long-term impact on Russia and to minimize the impact on the United States and our Allies. And I want to be clear: The United States is not doing this alone. For months, we've been building a coalition of partners representing well more than half

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of the global economy. Twenty-seven members of the European Union, including France, Germany, Italy — as well as the United Kingdom, Canada, Japan, Australia, New Zealand, and many others — to amplify the joint impact of our response. I just spoke with the G7 leaders this morning, and we are in full and total agreement. We will limit Russia's ability to do business in Dollars, Euros, Pounds, and Yen to be part of the global economy. We will limit their ability to do that. We are going to stunt the ability to finance and grow the Russian military. We're going to impose major — and we're going to impair their ability to compete in a high-tech 21st century economy. We've already seen the impact of our actions on Russia's currency, the Ruble, which early today hit its weakest level ever — ever in history. And the Russian stock market plunged today. The Russian government's borrowing rate spiked by over 15 percent.

In today's actions, we have now sanctioned Russian banks that together hold around \$1 trillion in assets. We've cut off Russia's largest bank — a bank that holds more than one third of Russia's banking assets by itself — cut it off from the U.S. financial system. And today, we're also blocking four more major banks. That means every asset they have in America will be frozen. This includes V.T.B., the second-largest bank in Russia, which has \$250 billion in assets. As promised, we're also adding names to the list of Russian elites and their family members that are sanctioning — that we're sanctioning as well. As I said on Tuesday, these are people who personally gain from the Kremlin's policies and they should share in the pain. We will keep up this drumbeat of those designations against corrupt billionaires in the days ahead. On Tuesday, we stopped the Russian government from raising money from U.S. or European investors. Now, we're going to apply the same restrictions to Russia's largest state-owned enterprises — companies with assets that exceed \$1.4 trillion.

Some of the most powerful impacts of our actions will come over time as we squeeze Russia's access to finance and technology for strategic sectors of its economy and degrade its industrial capacity for years to come. Between our actions and those of our Allies and partners, we estimate that we'll cut off more than half of Russia's high-tech imports. It will strike a blow to their ability to continue to modernize their military. It'll degrade their aerospace industry, including their space program. It will hurt their ability to build ships, reducing their ability to compete economically. And it will be a major hit to Putin's long-term strategic ambitions.

And we're preparing to do more. In addition to the economic penalties we're imposing, we're also taking steps to defend our NATO Allies, particularly in the east. Tomorrow, NATO will convene a summit — we'll be there — to bring together the leaders of 30 Allied nations and close partners to affirm our solidarity and to map out the next steps we will take to further strengthen all aspects of our NATO Alliance. Although

we provided over \$650 million in defensive assistance to Ukraine just this year — this last year, let me say it again: Our forces are not and will not be engaged in the conflict with Russia in Ukraine. Our forces are not going to Europe to fight in Ukraine but to defend our NATO Allies and reassure those Allies in the east. As I made crystal clear, the United States will defend every inch of NATO territory with the full force of American power. And the good news is: NATO is more united and more determined than ever. There is no doubt — no doubt that the United States and every NATO Ally will meet our Article 5 commitments, which says that an attack on one is an attack on all.

Over the past few weeks, I ordered thousands of additional forces to Germany and Poland as part of our commitment to NATO. On Tuesday, in response to Russia's aggressive action, including its troop presence in Belarus and the Black Sea, I've authorized the deployment of ground and air forces already stationed in Europe to NATO's eastern flank Allies: Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, and Romania.

Our Allies have also been stepping up, adding — the other Allies, the rest of NATO — adding their own forces and capabilities to ensure our collective defense. And today, within hours of Russia's unleashing its assault, NATO came together and authorized and activated — an activation of response plans. This will enable NATO's high-readiness forces to deploy and — when and where they're needed to protect our NATO Allies on the eastern boundaries of Europe. And now I'm authorizing additional U.S. forces and capabilities to deploy to Germany as part of NATO's response, including some of U.S.-based forces that the Department of Defense placed on standby weeks ago. I've also spoken with Defense Secretary Austin and Chairman of the Joint Chiefs, General Milley, about preparations for additional moves should they become necessary to protect our NATO Allies and support the greatest military Alliance in the history of the world — NATO.

As we respond, my administration is using the tools — every tool at our disposal to protect American families and businesses from rising prices at the gas pump. You know, we're taking active steps to bring down the costs. And American oil and gas companies should not — should not exploit this moment to hike their prices to raise profits. You know, in our sanctions package, we specifically designed to allow energy payments to continue. We are closely monitoring energy supplies for any disruption. We have been coordinating with major oil producing and consuming countries toward our common interest to secure global energy supplies. We are actively working with countries around the world to evaluate a collective release from the Strategic Petroleum Reserves of major energy-consuming countries. And the United States will release additional barrels of oil as conditions warrant. I know this is hard and that Americans are already hurting.

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I will do everything in my power to limit the pain the American people are feeling at the gas pump. This is critical to me.

But this aggression cannot go unanswered. If it did, the consequences for America would be much worse. America stands up to bullies. We stand up for freedom. This is who we are.

Let me also repeat the warning I made last week: If Russia pursues cyberattacks against our companies, our critical infrastructure, we are prepared to respond. For months, we have been working closely with our private — with the private sector to harden their cyber defenses, sharpen our ability to respond to Russian cyberattacks as well.

I spoke late last night to President Zelenskyy of Ukraine and I assured him that the United States, together with our Allies and partners in Europe, will support the Ukrainian people as they defend their country. We'll provide humanitarian relief to ease their suffering. And in the early days of this conflict, Russian propagandist outlets will keep trying to hide the truth and claim success for its military operation against a made-up threat. But history has shown time and again how swift gains in territory eventually give way to grinding occupations, acts of mass civil — mass civil disobedience, and strategic dead-ends. The next few weeks and months will be hard on the people of Ukraine. Putin has unleashed a great pain on them. But the Ukrainian people have known 30 years of independence, and they have repeatedly shown that they will not tolerate anyone who tries to take their country backwards.

This is a dangerous moment for all of Europe, for the freedom around the world. Putin has a — has committed an assault on the very principles that uphold global peace. But now the entire world sees clearly what Putin and his Kremlin — and his Kremlin allies are really all about. This was never about genuine security concerns on their part. It was always about naked aggression, about Putin's desire for empire by any means necessary — by bullying Russia's neighbors through coercion and corruption, by changing borders by force, and, ultimately, by choosing a war without a cause. Putin's actions betray his sinister vision for the future of our world — one where nations take what they want by force. But it is a vision that the United States and freedom-loving nations everywhere will oppose with every tool of our considerable power. The United States and our Allies and partners will emerge from this stronger, more united, more determined, and more purposeful.

And Putin's aggression against Ukraine will end up costing Russia dearly — economically and strategically. We will make sure of that. Putin will be a pariah on the international stage. Any nation that countenances Russia's naked aggression against Ukraine will be stained by association. When the history of this era is written, Putin's

choice to make a totally unjustifiable war on Ukraine will have left Russia weaker and the rest of the world stronger. Liberty, democracy, human dignity — these are the forces far more powerful than fear and oppression. They cannot be extinguished by tyrants like Putin and his armies. They cannot be erased by people — from people's hearts and hopes by any amount of violence and intimidation. They endure. And in the contest between democracy and autocracy, between sovereignty and subjugation, make no mistake: Freedom will prevail.

God bless the people of a free and democratic Ukraine. And may God protect our troops.

Joe Biden

Remarks given in Poland on the United Efforts of the Free World to Support the People of Ukraine

26.03.2022

Thank you, thank you, thank you. Please, if you have a seat, be seated. If you don't, come up on stage.

Thank you very much. It's a great honor to be here. Mr. President, they tell me you're over there somewhere. There you are. Thank you, Mr. President.

"Be not afraid." They were the first words at the first public address of the first Polish Pope after his election on October of 1978. They were words that would come to define Pope John Paul II. Words that would change the world. John Paul brought the message here to Warsaw in his first trip back home as Pope in June of 1979. It was a message about the power — the power of faith, the power of resilience, and the power of the people. In the face of a cruel and brutal system of government, it was a message that helped end the Soviet repression in the Central and Eastern Europe 30 years ago. It was a message that will overcome the cruelty and brutality of this unjust war. When Pope John Paul brought that message in 1979, the Soviet Union ruled with an iron fist behind an Iron Curtain.

Then a year later, the Solidarity movement took hold in Poland. And while I know he couldn't be here tonight, we're all grateful in America and around the world for Lech Wałęsa. It reminds me of that phrase of philosopher Kierkegaard: "Faith sees best in the dark." And there were dark moments. Ten years later, the Soviet Union collapsed, and Poland and Central and Eastern Europe would soon be free. Nothing about that battle for freedom was simple or easy. It was a long, painful slog fought over not days and months, but years and decades.

But we emerged anew in the great battle for freedom: a battle between democracy and autocracy, between liberty and repression, between a rules-based order and one governed by brute force. In this battle, we need to be clear-eyed. This battle will not be won in days or months either. We need to steel ourselves for the long fight ahead.

Mr. President, Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Mayor, members of the Parliament, distinguished guests, and the people of Poland, and I suspect some people of Ukraine that are here: We're, we are gathered here at the Royal Castle in this city that holds a sacred place in the history of not only of Europe, but humankind's unending search for freedom. For generations, Warsaw has stood where liberty has been challenged and liberty has prevailed. In fact, it was here in Warsaw when a young refugee, who fled her home country from Czechoslovakia was under Soviet domination, came back to speak

and stand in solidarity with dissidents. Her name was Madeleine Korbelt Albright. She became one of the most ardent supporters of democracy in the world. She was a friend with whom I served. America's first woman Secretary of State. She passed away three days ago. She fought her whole life for essential democratic principles. And now, in the perennial struggle for democracy and freedom, Ukraine and its people are on the frontlines fighting to save their nation.

And their brave resistance is part of a larger fight for an essential democratic principles that unite all free people: the rule of law; free and fair elections; the freedom to speak, to write, and to assemble; the freedom to worship as one chooses; freedom of the press. These principles are essential in a free society. But they have always — they have always been under siege. They've always been embattled. Every generation has had to defeat democracy's mortal foes. That's the way of the world — for the world is imperfect, as we know. Where the appetites and ambitions of a few forever seek to dominate the lives and liberties of many.

My message to the people of Ukraine is the message I delivered today to Ukraine's Foreign Minister and Defense Minister, who I believe are here tonight: We stand with you. Period. Today's fighting in Kyiv and Mariupol and Kharkiv are the latest battle in a long struggle: Hungary, 1956; Poland, 1956 then again 1981; Czechoslovakia, 1968. Soviet tanks crushed democratic uprisings, but the resistance continued until finally, in 1989, the Berlin Wall and all of the walls of Soviet domination — they fell. They fell. And the people prevailed. But the battle for democracy could not conclude and did not conclude with the end of the Cold War. Over the last 30 years, the forces of autocracy have revived all across the globe. Its hallmarks are familiar ones: contempt for the rule of law, contempt for democratic freedom, contempt for the truth itself.

Today, Russia has strangled democracy — has sought to do so elsewhere, not only in its homeland. Under false claims of ethnic solidarity, it has invaded neighboring nations. Putin has the gall to say he's "de-Nazifying" Ukraine. It's a lie. It's just cynical. He knows that. And it's also obscene. President Zelenskyy was democratically elected. He's Jewish. His father's family was wiped out in the Nazi Holocaust. And Putin has the audacity, like all autocrats before him, to believe that might will make right. In my own country, a former president named Abraham Lincoln voiced the opposing spirit to save our Union in the midst of a civil war. He said, "Let us have faith that right makes might." "Right makes might." Today, let us now have that faith again. Let us resolve to put the strength of democracies into action to thwart the designs of our — the designs of autocracy. Let us remember that the test of this moment is the test of all time.

The Kremlin wants to portray NATO enlargement as an imperial project aimed at destabilizing Russia. Nothing is further from the truth. NATO is a defensive alliance. It has

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never sought the demise of Russia. In the lead-up to the current crisis, the United States and NATO worked for months to engage Russia to avert a war. I met with him in person and talked to him many times on the phone. Time and again, we offered real diplomacy and concrete proposals to strengthen European security, enhance transparency, and build confidence on all sides.

But Putin and Russia met each of the proposals with disinterest in any negotiation, with lies and ultimatums. Russia was bent on violence from the start. I know not all of you believed me and us when we kept saying, “They are going to cross the border. They are going to attack.” Repeatedly, he asserted, “We have no interest in war.” Guaranteed he would not move. Repeatedly saying he would not invade Ukraine. Repeatedly saying Russian troops along the border were there for “training” — all 180,000 of them.

There is simply no justification or provocation for Russia’s choice of war. It’s an example of one of the oldest of human impulses: using brute force and disinformation to satisfy a craving for absolute power and control. It’s nothing less than a direct challenge to the rule-based international order established since the end of World War Two. And it threatens to return to decades of war that ravaged Europe before the international rule-based order was put in place. We cannot go back to that. We cannot.

The gravity of the threat is why the response of the West has been so swift and so powerful and so unified, unprecedented, and overwhelming. Swift and punishing costs are the only things that are going to get Russia to change its course. Within days of its invasion, the West had moved jointly with sanctions to damage Russia’s economy. Russia’s Central Bank is now blocked from the global financial systems, denying Kremlin’s access to the war fund it stashed around the globe. We’ve aimed at the heart of Russia’s economy by stopping the imports of Russian energy to the United States. To date, the United States has sanctioned 140 Russian oligarchs and their family members, seizing their ill-begotten gains: their yachts, their luxury apartments, their mansions. We’ve sanctioned more than 400 Russian government officials, including key architects of this war. These officials and oligarchs have reaped enormous benefit from the corruption connected to the Kremlin, and now they have to share in the pain. The private sector is acting as well. Over 400 private multinational companies have pulled out of doing business in Russia — left Russia completely — from oil companies to McDonald’s. As a result of these unprecedented sanctions, the ruble almost is immediately reduced to rubble. The Russian economy, that’s true, by the way. It takes about 200 rubles to equal one dollar. The economy is on track to be cut in half in the coming years. It was ranked — Russia’s economy was ranked the 11th biggest economy in the world before this evasion — invasion. It will soon not even rank among the top 20 in the world. Taken together, these economic sanctions are a new kind of economic statecraft with the power to inflict

damage that rivals military might. These international sanctions are sapping Russian strength, its ability to replenish its military, and its ability — its ability to project power. And it is Putin — it is Vladimir Putin who is to blame, period.

At the same time, alongside these economic sanctions, the Western world has come together to provide for the people of Ukraine with incredible levels of military, economic, and humanitarian assistance. In the years before the invasion, we, America, had sent over \$650 million, before they crossed the border, in weapons to Ukraine, including anti-air and anti-armor equipment. Since the invasion, America has committed another \$1.35 billion in weapons and ammunition. And thanks to the courage and bravery of the Ukrainian people, the equipment we've sent and our colleagues have sent have been used to devastating effect to defend Ukrainian land and airspace. Our Allies and partners have stepped up as well.

But as I've made clear: American forces are in Europe — not in Europe to engage in conflict with Russian forces. American forces are here to defend NATO Allies. Yesterday, I met with the troops that are serving alongside our Polish allies to bolster NATO's frontline defenses. The reason we wanted to make clear is their movement on Ukraine: Don't even think about moving on one single inch of NATO territory. We have a sacred obligation, we have a sacred obligation under Article 5 to defend each and every inch of NATO territory with the full force of our collective power.

And earlier today, I visited your National Stadium, where thousands of Ukrainian refugees are now trying to answer the toughest questions a human can ask: "My God, what's going to happen to me? What's going to happen to my family?" I saw tears in many of the mothers' eyes as I embraced them; their young children — their young children not sure whether to smile or cry. One little girl said, "Mr. President" — she spoke a little English — "is my brother and my daddy — are they going to be okay? Will I see them again?" Without their husbands, their fathers, in many cases, their brothers or sisters who stayed back to fight for their country. I didn't have to speak the language or understand the language to feel the emotion in their eyes, the way they gripped my hand, and little kids hung on to my leg, praying with a desperate hope that all this is temporary; apprehension that they may be perhaps forever away from their homes, almost with debilitating sadness that this is happening all over again.

But I was also struck by the generosity of the people of Warsaw — for that matter, all the Polish people — for the depths of their compassion, their willingness to reach out, opening their hearts. I was saying to the Mayor they're preparing to open their hearts and their homes simply to help. I also want to thank my friend, the great American chef, José Andrés, and his team who helped feeling those, feeding those who are yearning to be free.

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But helping these refugees is not something Poland or any other nation should carry alone. All the world democracies have a responsibility to help. All of them. And the people of Ukraine can count on the United States to meet its responsibility. I've announced, two days ago, we will welcome 100,000 Ukrainian refugees. We already have 8,000 a week coming to the United States of other nat- — nationalities. We'll provide nearly \$300 million of humanitarian assistance, providing tens of thousands of tons of food, water, medicine, and other basic supplies. In Brussels, I announced the United States is prepared to provide more than \$1 billion, in addition, in humanitarian aid. The World Food Programme told us that despite significant obstacles, at least some relief is getting to major cities in Ukraine, but not Metropol [sic] — no, excuse me, Mar... not Mariupol, because Russian forces are blocking relief supplies.

But we'll not cease our efforts to get humanitarian relief wherever it is needed in Ukraine and for the people who've made it out of Ukraine. Notwithstanding the brutality of Vladimir Putin, let there be no doubt that this war has already been a strategic failure for Russia already. Having lost children myself — I know that's no solace to the people who've lost family. But he, Putin, thought Ukrainians would roll over and not fight. Not much of a student of history. Instead, Russian forces have met their match with brave and stiff Ukrainian resistance. Rather than breaking Ukrainian resolve, Russia's brutal tactics have strengthened the resolve.

Rather than driving NATO apart, the West is now stronger and more united than it has ever been. Russia wanted less of a NATO presence on its border, but now he has [we have] a stronger presence, a larger presence, with over a hundred thousand American troops here, along with all the other members of NATO. In fact, Russia has managed to cause something I'm sure he never intended: The democracies of the world are revitalized with purpose and unity found in months that we'd once taken years to accomplish.

It's not only Russia's actions in Ukraine that are reminding us of democracy's blessing. It's our own country — his own country, the Kremlin, is jailing protestors. Two hundred thousand people have allegedly already left. There's a brain drain — leaving Russia. Shutting down independent news. State media is all propaganda, blocking the image of civilian targets, mass graves, starvation tactics of the Russian forces in Ukraine. Is it any wonder, as I said, that 200,000 Russians have all left their country in one month? A remarkable brain drain in such a short period of time, which brings me to my message to the Russian people:

I've worked with Russian leaders for decades. I sat across the negotiating table going all the way back to Soviet Premier Alexei Kosygin to talk arms control at the height of the Cold War. I've always spoken directly and honestly to you, the Russian people. Let me say this, if you're able to listen: You, the Russian people, are not our enemy. I refuse

to believe that you welcome the killing of innocent children and grandparents or that you accept hospitals, schools, maternity wards that, for God's sake, are being pummeled with Russian missiles and bombs; or cities being surrounded so that civilians cannot flee; supplies cut off and attempting to starve Ukrainians into submission. Millions of families are being driven from their homes, including half of all Ukraine's children. These are not the actions of a great nation. Of all people, you, the Russian people, as well as all people across Europe, still have the memory of being in a similar situation in the late thirties and forties — the situation of World War Two — still fresh in the minds of many grandparents in the region. What — whatever your generation experienced — whether it experienced the Siege of Leningrad or heard about it from your parents and grandparents — train stations overflowing with terrified families fleeing their homes; nights sheltering in basements and cellars; mornings sitting through the rubble in your homes — these are not memories of the past. Not anymore. Because it's exactly what the Russian army is doing in Ukraine right now.

March 26, 2022. Just days before — we're at the twenty-first — you were a 21st century nation with hopes and dreams that people all over the world have for themselves and their family. Now, Vladimir Putin's aggression have cut you, the Russian people, off from the rest of the world, and it's taking Russia back to the 19th century. This is not who you are. This is not the future reserve — you deserve for your families and your children. I'm telling you the truth: This war is not worthy of you, the Russian people. Putin can and must end this war. The American people stand with you and the brave citizens of Ukraine who want peace.

And my message to the rest of Europe: This new battle for freedom has already made a few things crystal clear.

First, Europe must end its dependence on Russian fossil fuels. And we, the United States, will help. That's why just yesterday, in Brussels, I announced a plan with the President of the European Commission to get Europe through the immediate energy crisis. Over the long term, as a matter of economic security and national security and for the survivability of the planet, we all need to move as quickly as possible to clean, renewable energy. And we'll work together to help get that done so that the days of any nation being subject to the whims of a tyrant for its energy needs are over. They must end. They must end.

And second, we have to fight the corruption coming from the Kremlin to give the Russian people a fair chance.

And finally, and most urgently, we maintain absolute unity — we must — among the world's democracies. It's not enough to speak with rhetorical flourish, of ennobling words of democracy, of freedom, equality, and liberty. All of us, including here in Poland,

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must do the hard work of democracy each and every day. My country as well. That's why, that's why I came to Europe again this week with a clear and determined message for NATO, for the G7, for the European Union, for all freedom-loving nations: We must commit now to be in this fight for the long haul. We must remain unified today and tomorrow and the day after and for the years and decades to come. It will not be easy. There will be costs. But it's a price we have to pay. Because the darkness that drives autocracy is ultimately no match for the flame of liberty that lights the souls of free people everywhere. Time and again, history shows that it's from the darkest moments that the greatest progress follows. And history shows this is the task of our time, the task of this generation.

Let's remember: The hammer blow that brought down the Berlin Wall, the might that lifted the Iron Curtain were not the words of a single leader; it was the people of Europe who, for decades, fought to free themselves. Their sheer bravery opened the border between Austria and Hungary for the Pan-European Picnic. They joined hands for the Baltic Way. They stood for Solidarity here in Poland. And together, it was an unmistakable and undeniable force of the people that the Soviet Union could not withstand. And we're seeing it once again today with the brave Ukrainian people, showing that their power of many is greater than the will of any one dictator.

So, in this hour, let the words of Pope John Paul burn as brightly today: "Never, ever give up hope, never doubt, never tire, never become discouraged. Be not afraid." A dictator bent on rebuilding an empire will never erase a people's love for liberty. Brutality will never grind down their will to be free. Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia — for free people refuse to live in a world of hopelessness and darkness. We will have a different future — a brighter future rooted in democracy and principle, hope and light, of decency and dignity, of freedom and possibilities.

For God's sake, this man cannot remain in power.

God bless you all. And may God defend our freedom. And may God protect our troops. Thank you for your patience. Thank you. Thank you. Thank you.

Antony J. Blinken, Secretary of StateRemarks at the United Nations Security Council Ministerial Meeting
on Ukrainian Sovereignty and Russian Accountability

22.09.2022

Thank you very much, Madam President, for having brought this council together at this very grave moment of the crisis of the war of Russia on Ukraine.

Mr. Secretary General, thank you for your determination and the moral clarity that you've brought to ending this brutal war and defending the UN's core principles, and also for your personal engagement in securing the vital Black Sea route for grain to flow once again from Ukraine.

Mr. Khan, we're grateful for the efforts of the Office of the Prosecutor to investigate objectively and professionally the atrocities being committed in Ukraine by Russian forces, and for its support for – and coordination with – Ukrainian investigators and prosecutors.

We hear a lot about the divisions among countries at the United Nations. But recently, what is striking is the remarkable unity among member-states when it comes to Russia's war on Ukraine. Leaders from countries developing and developed, big and small, north and south have spoken in the General Assembly about the consequences of this war and the need to end it. And they've called on all of us to reaffirm our commitment to the UN Charter and its core principles, including sovereignty, territorial integrity, human rights. Even a number of nations that maintain close ties with Moscow have said publicly that they have serious questions and concerns about President Putin's ongoing invasion.

Rather than change course, however, President Putin has doubled down – choosing not to end the war but to expand it; not to pull troops back but to call 300,000 additional troops up; not to ease tensions but to escalate them through the threat of nuclear weapons; not to work toward a diplomatic solution but to render such a solution impossible by seeking to annex more Ukrainian territory through sham referenda. That President Putin picked this week, as most of the world gathers at the United Nations, to add fuel to the fire that he started, shows his utter contempt for the UN Charter, for the General Assembly, and for this council. The very international order that we have gathered here to uphold is being shredded before our eyes. We cannot – we will not – allow President Putin to get away with it.

Defending Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity is about much more than standing up for one nation's right to choose its own path, fundamental as that right is. It's also about protecting an international order where no nation can redraw the borders of another by force. If we fail to defend this principle when the Kremlin is so flagrantly

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violating it, we send a message to aggressors everywhere that they can ignore it, too. We put every country at risk. We open the door to a less secure, a less peaceful world.

We see what that world looks like in the parts of Ukraine controlled by Russian forces. Wherever the Russian tide recedes, we discover the horror that's left in its wake. I had a window into that horror myself when I traveled to Irpin just a few weeks ago to meet with the Ukrainian investigators who are compiling evidence of war crimes committed there. I saw up close the gaping holes left in residential buildings by Russian shelling – indiscriminate at best, intentional at worst. As we assemble here, Ukrainian and international investigators continue to exhume bodies outside of Izyum, a city Russian forces controlled for six months before they were driven out by a Ukrainian counteroffensive. One site contains some 440 unmarked graves. A number of the bodies unearthed there so far reportedly show signs of torture, including one victim with broken arms and a rope around his neck. Survivors' accounts are also emerging, including a man who described being tortured by Russian forces for a dozen days, during which his interrogators repeatedly electrocuted him and, in his words, and I quote, “beat me to the point where I didn't feel anything,” end quote. These are not the acts of rogue units. They fit a clear pattern across the territory controlled by Russian forces.

This is one of the many reasons that we support a range of national and international efforts to collect and examine the mounting evidence of war crimes in Ukraine. We must hold the perpetrators accountable for these crimes. It's also one of the reasons why more than 40 nations have come together to help the Ukrainian people defend themselves, a right that is enshrined in Article 51 of the United Nations Charter.

The more setbacks Russian forces endure on the battlefield, the greater the pain they are inflicting on Ukrainian civilians. Russian attacks on dams, on bridges, on power stations, on hospitals, on other civilian infrastructure are increasing, constituting a brazen violation of international humanitarian law. This week, President Putin said that Russia would not hesitate to use, and I quote, “all weapons systems available,” end quote, in response to a threat to its territorial integrity, a threat that is all the more menacing given Russia's intention to annex large swaths of Ukraine in the days ahead. When that's complete, we can expect President Putin will claim any Ukrainian effort to liberate this land as an attack on so-called “Russian territory.”

This from a country that in January of this year, in this place, joined other permanent members of the Security Council in signing a statement affirming that, and I quote, “nuclear war can never be won and must never be fought.” Yet another example of how Russia violates the commitments it's made before this body, and yet another reason why nobody should take Russia at its word today. Every council member should send a clear message that these reckless nuclear threats must stop immediately.

Russia's effort to annex more Ukrainian territory is another dangerous escalation, as well as a repudiation of diplomacy. It is even more alarming when coupled with the filtration operation that Russian forces have been carrying out across parts of Ukraine that they control. Now, this is a diabolical strategy, violently uprooting thousands of Ukrainians, bus in Russians to replace them, call a vote, manipulate the results to show near unanimous support for joining the Russian Federation. This is right out of the Crimea playbook. As with Crimea, it's imperative that every member of this council, and for that matter, every member of the United Nations reject the sham referenda and unequivocally declare that all Ukrainian territory is and will remain part of Ukraine, and no Russian claim to annex territory can take away Ukraine's right to defend its own land.

Putin's invasion is also distracting this council – in fact, the entire UN system – from working on the serious issues that we all want to focus on. Like preventing a climate catastrophe, aiding tens of millions of people on the brink of famine, fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, shoring up our interconnected health security – all issues that make a tangible difference in the lives of the citizens that we are here to represent, and that they are looking to us – looking to us to deliver on. The overwhelming majority of UN member-states are committed to working together on these issues, and our actions show that.

Yet while more than a hundred countries have signed on to a roadmap to provide food aid to those who need it, and partners across Africa, Asia, the Americas, and Europe are working together to increase the resilience of global food systems, Russia for months blocked the export of Ukrainian grain to the world, until the United Nations and Turkey secured a deal to let the grain go. And Russia continues to bomb and seize Ukrainian farms and silos, line its wheat fields with landmines, raising the cost of food for people everywhere.

And while governments around the world are teaming up with international organizations, with the private sector, with philanthropies to end this pandemic and make sure that we're better prepared for the next one, Russia is spreading misinformation and disinformation about WHO-approved vaccines – fueling vaccine hesitancy that puts people in all our countries at greater risk.

Here is the reality: None of us chose this war. Not the Ukrainians, who knew the crushing toll it would take. Not the United States, which warned that it was coming and worked to prevent it. Not the vast majority of countries at the United Nations. And neither did our people, or the people of virtually every UN member-state, who are feeling the war's consequences in greater food insecurity and higher energy prices.

Nor did the Russian mothers and fathers whose children are being sent off to fight and die in this war, or the Russian citizens who continue to risk their freedom to protest

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against it, including those who came out into the streets of Moscow after President Putin announced his mobilization to chant, “Let our children live!” Indeed, it must be asked: How has this aggression against Ukraine by President Putin improved the lives or prospects of a single Russian citizen?

One man chose this war. One man can end it.

Because if Russia stops fighting, the war ends. If Ukraine stops fighting, Ukraine ends.

That’s why we will continue to support Ukraine as it defends itself, and strengthen its hand to achieve a diplomatic solution on just terms at a negotiating table. As President Zelenskyy has said repeatedly, diplomacy is the only way to end this war. But diplomacy cannot and must not be used as a cudgel to impose on Ukraine a settlement that cuts against the UN Charter, or rewards Russia for violating it. President Putin is making his choice. Now it’s up to all of our countries to make ours. Tell President Putin to stop the horror that he started. Tell him to stop putting his interests above the interests of the rest of the world, including his own people. Tell him to stop debasing this council and everything it stands for.

“We the peoples of the United Nations determined...” That is how the preamble of the UN Charter starts. Let’s not forget that “we the peoples” still get to choose the fate of this institution and our world. The stakes are clear. The choice is ours. Let’s make the right choice for the world that we want and that our people so desperately deserve. Thank you.

Joe Biden and Volodymyr Zelenskyy

Joint Statement in Kyiv

20.02.2022

PRESIDENT ZELENSKYY: Mr. President, fellow ladies and gentlemen, journalists and everyone in this room, the team of President Biden: I'm very happy to welcome you in Ukraine. It is a great honor for me and for all of us.

We have just had negotiations with the President of the United States in the vis-à-vis format, and then we had a wide discussion with the involvement of our teams. These conversations brings us closer to the victory. And we hope that this year, the 2023, will become a year of victory. This unprovoked and criminal Russia's war against Ukraine and against the whole world and democratic world has to end with liberating the whole of Ukraine's territory from Russia's occupation and the solid guarantees of the long-term security for our country as well as Europe and the whole world.

Right now, in Ukraine, the destiny of the international order based on international order is decided. And we, together with President Biden and our allies and partners, have to continue doing everything possible so that the democratic world would win in this historic fight. Ukrainian remember the focus, the attention, the attitude of President Biden and United States to every single Ukrainian. To Ukraine, we remain constantly in communication with the President of United States over the course of this large-scale war. And this is the first visit over 15 years. And this is really the most important visit of the whole history of Ukraine-U.S. relationship.

This is the visit in this most difficult period for Ukraine when Ukraine is fighting for our own liberty, for the liberties of the world. And this underlines the results that we have already achieved and what sort of historic achievements we might gain altogether with the whole world, with the United States, with Europe. And today our negotiations were very fruitful. We've — they were very important and crucial. And as has become traditional in relationship between our countries, I would like to extend words of gratitude personally to Mr. President Biden and to his team, to the Congress, to all the U.S. people. And I thank you for this level of Ukraine-U.S. cooperation. And this week, we'll be marking a one year of our fight against Russia's aggression, so it's very symbolic that we solidify our resilience through two meetings with the President of Ukraine — my visit in December and the visit of Mr. President of the United States to Kyiv today.

The results of this visit will surely be seen and will surely have a reflection on the battlefield and in liberating our territories. The decision of the United States on Abrams tanks for Ukraine has already presented a foundation for establishing a tank coalition. And it's of historic importance in many other aspects, more specifically in air defense,

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in Patriots for the defense of our cities. Now, this is a very fundamental and crucial reinforcement of our capacities. We've also talked about long-range weapons and the weapons that may still be supplied to Ukraine, even though it wasn't supplied before.

I know, Mr. President, that there will be a very significant package of security support to Ukraine. And currently, it will serve as a clear signal that Russia's attempts of relaunch will have no chance and that we will together defend our cities and citizens from Russia's (inaudible), will have more impetus towards our victory.

And today we have yet again underlined that we have our common vision with regards to the perspectives of this war. We have coordinated the follow-on pressure on the terrorist state. We are working hard on the reinforcement of sanctions, both bilaterally and in the form of G7, which is very important. We have common vision on the contents of many aspects of our Peace Formula, because its security elements, as well as the tasks to restore the U.N. Charter to its full capacity and to defend the international rule-based order — that's a common, joint task for all the countries that are interested in the international security.

The rebuilding and the recovery of justice is also very important for all those who was affected by the Russian terror, by the Russian war. And the aggressor has to take responsibility for the aggression and to reimburse all the damages. I thank to the President of United States for supporting our work on restoring the justice more specifically in the work of all of our institutions in that area. And we believe there's no alternatives to the establishment of the special tribunal. This is the position of the Uni— of Ukraine, and we shall support this position.

And I would really like the United States to be engaged in the implementation of our Peace Formula, because its implementation would mean a reinforcement of global stability and the predictability of international relations. And we have some achievements in this area. Already this week, in New York, together with the United States of America and over 60 other countries will be submitting for the consideration of the U.N. General Assembly — of the draft resolution on supporting peace in Ukraine. And on the eve of the 24th of February, we believe that the approval of this resolution would be very significant evidence to the fact that the terrorist state would never break a civilized country.

And I think we are also opening a special tablet dedicated to President Biden. The first call the night of the 24th of February took place with the United States, and since that time, we had conversations and with very significant attention to our fight, to the protection of Ukraine's democracy. Besides, there's the personal contribution in President Biden in solidified the liberty and democracy in the world. This will be

remembered eternally. And Ukraine is grateful to you, Mr. President, to all the U.S. citizens, to all those who cherish freedom just as we cherish them.

Glory to our warriors. Glory to our allies. And glory to Ukraine.

PRESIDENT BIDEN: Well, thank you very much, Mr. President. You know, it was — it was one year ago this week that we spoke on the telephone, Mr. President. It was very late at night in Washington, very early in the morning here in Kyiv. Russian planes were in the air, and tanks were rolling across your border. You told me that you could hear the explosions in the background. I'll never forget that. And the world was about to change.

I remember it vividly, because I asked you — I asked you next — I asked you, “What is there, Mr. President? What can I do for you? How can I be of help?” And I don't know that you remember what you said to me, but you said, and I quote, “Gather the leaders of the world. Ask them to support Ukraine.” “Gather the leaders of the world, and ask them to support Ukraine.” And you said that you didn't know when we'd be able to speak again. That dark night, one year ago, the world was literally, at the time, bracing for the fall of Kyiv — it seems like a lot longer ago than a year, but think back to that year — perhaps even the end of Ukraine.

You know, one year later, Kyiv stands and Ukraine stands. Democracy stands. The Americans stand with you, and the world stands with you.

Kyiv has captured a part of my heart, I must say. And I've come here six times as Vice President, once as President. And in 2009, as Vice President, when I first came here. Then back in 2014, I came three times in the aftermath of the Revolution of Dignity. And I again came in 2015 to address the Rada about the work of building a strong democracy. And I came in 2017, just before I left office as Vice President. I knew I'd be back, but I wanted to be sure. Even though we'd — the election were over, Barack and I were out of office, I decided to make one more trip, before the next President was sworn in, to Kyiv.

So, President Zelenskyy, you deeply honor me here in Kyiv with you today to meet with your military, your intelligence folks, your diplomatic teams, community leaders who have stepped up and — to help their country in their hour of need. It's astounding who stood up. Everybody. Everybody — women, young children — trying to do something. Just trying to do something. Pulling people out of apartments that are being shelled and — literally what I think is a war crimes. It's astounding. And the whole world — the whole world sees it and looks at it.

This is the largest land war in Europe in three quarters of a century, and you're succeeding against all and every expectation, except your own. We have every confidence that you're going to continue to prevail. You know, from the moment I first received the intelligence report in the fall, about a year ago, we were focused on

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determining: How do we rally the rest of the world? How do I help you with the promise you asked me to make to rally the world? Well, how do you succeed? How do you ever get a world to respond to a prosperous economy, a confident democracy, a secure and independent state?

When united, Americans of all political backgrounds decided that they would step up. The American people know it matters. Unchecked aggression is a threat to all of us.

We built a coalition of nations, from the Atlantic to the Pacific: NATO to the Atla- — in the Atlantic; Japan in the Pacific. I mean, across the — across the world, the number of nations stood up — over 50 — to help Ukraine defend itself with unprecedented military, economic, and humanitarian support. We united the leading economies of the world to impose unprecedented cost that are squeezing Russia's economic lifelines.

Together, we've committed nearly 700 tanks and thousands of armored vehicles, 1,000 artillery systems, more than 2 million rounds of artillery ammunition, more than 50 advanced launch rocket systems, anti-ship and air defense systems, all defend U- — to defend Ukraine. And that doesn't count the other half a billion dollars we're going to be — we're announcing with you today and tomorrow that's going to be coming your way. And that's just the United States, in this piece.

And just today, that announcement includes artillery ammunition for HIMARS and howitzers, more Javelins, anti-armor systems, air surveillance radars that'll protect Ukrainian people from aerial bombardments. Later this week, we will announce additional sanctions against elites and companies that are trying to evade sanctions and backfill Russia's war machine. And thanks to a bipartisan support in Congress, this week we're delivering billions in direct budgetary support — billions in direct budgetary support — which the government can put to use immediately and help provide for basic services of citizens.

The cost that Ukraine has had to bear has been extraordinarily high, and the sacrifices have been far too great. They've been met, but they've been far too great. We mourn alongside the families of those who have been lost to the brutal and unjust war. We know that there'll be very difficult days and weeks and years ahead.

But Russia's aim was to wipe Ukraine off the map. Putin's war of conquest is failing. Russia's military has lost half its territory it once occupied. Young, talented Russians are fleeing by the tens of thousands, not wanting to come back to Russia. Not fl- — not just fleeing from the military, fleeing from Russia itself, because they see no future in their country. Russia's economy is now a backwater, isolated and struggling. Putin thought Ukraine was weak and the West was divided. As you know, Mr. President, I said to you at the beginning, he's counting on us not sticking together. He was counting on the

inability to keep NATO united. He was counting on us not to be able to bring in others on the side of Ukraine.

He thought he could outlast us. I don't think he's thinking that right now. God knows what he's thinking, but I don't think he's thinking that. But he's just been plain wrong. Plain wrong. And one year later, the evidence is right here in this room. We stand here together.

Mr. President, I'm delighted to be able to repay your visit to our country. In Washington, not long ago, you told us, you told the Congress, quote, "We have no fear, nor should anyone in the world have it." End of quote.

You and all Ukrainians, Mr. President, remind the world every single day what the meaning of the word "courage" is — from all sectors of your economy, all walks of life. It's astounding. Astounding.

You remind us that freedom is priceless; it's worth fighting for for as long as it takes. And that's how long we're going to be with you, Mr. President: for as long as it takes.

PRESIDENT ZELENSKYY: We'll do it.

PRESIDENT BIDEN: Thank you.

Joe Biden

Remarks Ahead of the One-Year Anniversary of Russia's Invasion of Ukraine at the Royal Castle in Warsaw

21.02.2023

Hello, Poland! One of our great allies. President Duda, Prime Minister — Mr. Prime Minister, Mr. Mayor, and to all the former ministers and presidents, as well as mayors and Polish political leaders from all across the country: Thank you for welcoming me back to Poland.

You know, it was nearly one year ago I spoke at the Royal Castle here in Warsaw, just weeks after Vladimir Putin had unleashed his murderous assault on Ukraine. The largest land war in Europe since World War Two had begun. And the principles that had been the cornerstone of peace, prosperity, and stability on this planet for more than 75 years were at risk of being shattered.

One year ago, the world was bracing for the fall of Kyiv. Well, I have just come from a visit to Kyiv, and I can report: Kyiv stands strong! Kyiv stands proud. It stands tall. And most important, it stands free.

When Russia invaded, it wasn't just Ukraine being tested. The whole world faced a test for the ages. Europe was being tested. America was being tested. NATO was being tested. All democracies were being tested. And the questions we faced were as simple as they were profound.

Would we respond or would we look the other way? Would we be strong or would we be weak? Would we — we would — would we be — all of our allies — would be united or divided?

One year later, we know the answer.

We did respond. We would be strong. We would be united. And the world would not look the other way.

We also faced fundamental questions about the commitment to the most basic of principles. Would we stand up for the sovereignty of nations? Would we stand up for the right of people to live free from naked aggression? Would we stand up for democracy?

One year later, we know the answers.

Yes, we would stand up for sovereignty. And we did.

Yes, we would stand up for the right of people to live free from aggression. And we did.

And we would stand up for democracy. And we did.

And yesterday, I had the honor to stand with President Zelenskyy in Kyiv to declare that we will keep standing up for these same things no matter what.

When President Putin ordered his tanks to roll into Ukraine, he thought we would roll over. He was wrong.

The Ukrainian people are too brave.

America, Europe, a coalition of nations from the Atlantic to the Pacific — we were too unified.

Democracy was too strong.

Instead of an easy victory he perceived and predicted, Putin left with burnt-out tanks and Russia's forces in delay — in disarray.

He thought he'd get the Finlandization of NATO. Instead, he got the NATOization of Finland — and Sweden. He thought NATO would fracture and divide. Instead, NATO is more united and more unified than ever — than ever before.

He thought he could weaponize energy to crack your resolve — Europe's resolve. Instead, we're working together to end Europe's dependence on Russian fossil fuels.

He thought autocrats like himself were tough and leaders of democracies were soft. And then, he met the iron will of America and the nations everywhere that refused to accept a world governed by fear and force. He found himself at war with a nation led by a man whose courage would be forged in fire and steel: President Zelenskyy.

President Putin is confronted with something today that he didn't think was possible a year ago. The democracies of the world have grown stronger, not weaker. But the autocrats of the world have grown weaker, not stronger. Because in the moments of great upheaval and uncertainty, that knowing what you stand for is most important, and knowing who stands with you makes all the difference.

The people of Poland know that. You know that. In fact, you know — you know it better than anyone here in Poland. Because that's what solidarity means.

Through partition and oppression, when the beautiful city was destroyed after the Warsaw Uprising, during decades under the iron fist of communist rule, Poland endured because you stood together.

That's how the brave leaders of the opposition and the people of Belarus continue to fight for their democracy.

That's how the resolve of Moldovan people to live in freedom gained them independence and put them on the path to EU membership. President Sandu is here today. I'm not sure where she is. But I'm proud to stand with you and the freedom-loving people of Moldova. Give her a round of applause.

One year in- — one year into this war, Putin no longer doubts the strength of our coalition. But he still doubts our conviction. He doubts our staying power. He doubts our continued support for Ukraine. He doubts whether NATO can remain unified. But there should be no doubt: Our support for Ukraine will not waver, NATO will not be

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divided, and we will not tire. President Putin's craven lust for land and power will fail. And the Ukrainian people's love for their country will prevail. Democracies of the world will stand guard over freedom today, tomorrow, and forever. For that's what — that's what's at stake here: freedom. That's the message I carried to Kyiv yesterday, directly to the people of Ukraine.

When President Zelenskyy said — he came to the United States in December — quote — he said this struggle will define the world and what our children and grandchildren — how they live, and then their children and grandchildren. He wasn't only speaking about the children and grandchildren of Ukraine. He was speaking about all of our children and grandchildren. Yours and mine.

We're seeing again today what the people of Poland and the people all across Europe saw for decades: Appetites of the autocrat cannot be appeased. They must be opposed. Autocrats only understand one word: "No." "No." "No."

"No, you will not take my country." "No, you will not take my freedom." "No, you will not take my future."

And I'll repeat tonight what I said last year in this same place: A dictator bent on rebuilding an empire will never be able to ease [erase] the people's love of liberty. Brutality will never grind down the will of the free. And Ukraine — Ukraine will never be a victory for Russia. Never.

For free people refuse to live in a world of hopelessness and darkness. You know, this has been an extraordinary year in every sense.

Extraordinary brutality from Russian forces and mercenaries. They have committed depravities, crimes against humanity, without shame or compunction. They've targeted civilians with death and destruction. Used rape as a weapon of war. Stolen Ukrainian children in an attempt to — in an attempt to steal Ukraine's future. Bombed train stations, maternity hospitals, schools, and orphanages.

No one — no one can turn away their eyes from the atrocities Russia is committing against the Ukrainian people. It's abhorrent. It's abhorrent. But extraordinarily, as well, has been the response of the Ukrainian people and the world.

One year after the bombs began to fall and Russian tanks rolled into Ukraine, Ukraine is still independent and free. From Kherson to Kharkiv, Ukrainian fighters have reclaimed their land. In more than 50 percent of the territory Russia held last year, the blue and the yellow flag of Ukraine proudly waves once again. President Zelenskyy still leads a democratically elected government that represents the will of the Ukrainian people.

And the world has already voted multiple times, including in the United Nations General Assembly, to condemn Russia's aggression and support a just peace. Each time in the U.N., that vote has been overwhelming. In October, 143 nations in the United

Nations condemned Russia's illegal annexation. Only four — four in the entire U.N. — voted with Russia. Four.

So, tonight, I speak once more to the people of Russia. The United States and the nations of Europe do not seek to control or destroy Russia. The West was not plotting to attack Russia, as Putin said today. And millions of Russian citizens who only want to live in peace with their neighbors are not the enemy.

This war was never a necessity; it's a tragedy.

President Putin chose this war. Every day the war continues is his choice. He could end the war with a word. It's simple. If Russia stopped invading Ukraine, it would end the war. If Ukraine stopped defending itself against Russia, it would be the end of Ukraine. That's why, together, we're making sure Ukraine can defend itself.

The United States has assembled a worldwide coalition of more than 50 nations to get critical weapons and supplies to the brave Ukrainian fighters on the frontlines. Air defense systems, artillery, ammunition, tanks, and armored vehicles.

The European Union and its member states have stepped up with unprecedented commitment to Ukraine, not just in security assistance, but economic, and humanitarian, refugee assistance, and so much more. To all of you here tonight: Take a moment. And I'm serious when I say this: Turn on and look — turn around and look at one another. Look at what you've done so far. Poland is hosting more than 1.5 million refugees from this war. God bless you. Poland's generosity, your willingness to open your hearts and your homes, is extraordinary.

And the American people are united in our resolve as well. All across my country, in big cities and small towns, Ukrainian flags fly from American homes. Over the past year, Democrats and Republicans in our United States Congress have come together to stand for freedom. That's who Americans are, and that's what Americans do.

The world is also coming together to address the global fallout from President Putin's war.

Putin tried to starve the world, blocking the ports in the Black Sea to stop Ukraine from exporting its grain, exacerbating the global food crisis that hit developing nations in Africa especially hard. Instead, the United States and the G7 and partners around the world answered the call with historic commitments to address the crisis and to bolster global food supplies. And this week, my wife, Jill Biden, is traveling to Africa to help bring attention to this critical issue.

Our commitment is to the people of Ukraine and the future of Ukraine — a Ukraine that's free, sovereign, and democratic.

That was the dream of those who declared Ukraine's independence more than 30 years ago — who led the Orange Revolution and the Revolution of Dignity; who braved

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ice and fire on the Maidan and the Heavenly Hundred who died there; and those who continue still to root out Kremlin's efforts to corrupt, coerce, and control. It's a dream for those Ukrainian patriots who have fought for years against Russia's aggressions in the Donbas and the heroes who have given everything, given their lives, in the service of their beloved Ukraine. I was honored to visit their memorial in Kyiv yesterday to pay tribute to the sacrifice of those who lost their lives, standing alongside President Zelenskyy.

The United States and our partners stand with Ukraine's teachers, its hospital staff, its emergency responders, the workers in cities across Ukraine who are fighting to keep the power on in the face of Russia's cruel bombardment. We stand with the millions of refugees of this war who have found a welcome in Europe and the United States, particularly here in Poland. Ordinary people all across Europe did whatever they could to help and continue to do so. Polish businesses, civil society, cultural leaders — including the First Lady of Poland, who is here tonight — have led with the heart and determination, showcasing all that's good about the human spirit.

Madam First Lady, we love you. Thank you all.

I'll never forget, last year, visiting with refugees from Ukraine who had just arrived in Warsaw, seeing their faces exhausted and afraid — holding their children so close, worrying they might never see their fathers, their husbands, their brothers or sisters again. In that darkest moment of their lives, you, the people of Poland, offered them safety and light. You embraced them. You literally embraced them. I watched. I watched the looks on their faces.

Meanwhile, together we have made sure that Russia is paying the price for its abuses. We continue to maintain the largest sanctions regime ever imposed on any country in history. And we're going to announce more sanctions this week together with our partners. We'll hold accountable those who are responsible for this war. And we will seek justice for the war crimes and crimes against humanity continuing to be committed by the Russians.

You know, there is much for us to be proud of over the — all that we have achieved together this past year. But we have to be honest and cleared-eyed as we look at the year ahead. The defense of freedom is not the work of a day or of a year. It's always difficult. It's always important.

As Ukraine continues to defend itself against the Russian onslaught and launch counter-offensives of its own, there will continue to be hard and very bitter days, victories and tragedies. But Ukraine is steeled for the fight ahead. And the United States, together with our Allies and partners, are going to continue to have Ukraine's back as it defends itself.

Next year, I will host every member of NATO for our 2024 summit in the United States. Together, we'll celebrate the 75th anniversary of the strongest defensive alliance in the

history of the world — NATO. And let there be no doubt, the commitment of the United States to our NATO Alliance and Article 5 is rock solid. And every member of NATO knows it. And Russia knows it as well. An attack against one is an attack against all. It's a sacred oath. A sacred oath to defend every inch of NATO territory.

Over the past year, the United States has come together with our Allies and partners in an extraordinary coalition to stand against Russian aggression. But the work in front of us is not just what we're against, it's about what we're for. What kind of world do we want to build?

We need to take the strength and capacity of this coalition and apply it to lifting up — lifting up the lives of people everywhere, improving health, growing prosperity, preserving the planet, building peace and security, treating everyone with dignity and respect. That's our responsibility. The democracies of the world have to deliver it for our people.

As we gather tonight, the world, in my view, is at an — at an inflection point. The decisions we make over the next five years or so are going to determine and shape our lives for decades to come. That's true for Americans. It's true for the people of the world.

And while decisions are ours to make now, the principles and the stakes are eternal. A choice between chaos and stability. Between building and destroying. Between hope and fear. Between democracy that lifts up the human spirit and the brutal hand of the dictator who crushes it. Between nothing less than limitation and possibilities, the kind of possibilities that come when people who live not in captivity but in freedom. Freedom.

Freedom. There is no sweeter word than freedom. There is no nobler goal than freedom. There is no higher aspiration than freedom. Americans know that, and you know it. And all that we do now must be done so our children and grandchildren will know it as well.

Freedom.

The enemy of the tyrant and the hope of the brave and the truth of the ages.

Freedom.

Stand with us. We will stand with you.

Let us move forward with faith and conviction and with an abiding commitment to be allies not of darkness, but of light. Not of oppression, but of liberation. Not of captivity, but, yes, of freedom.

May God bless you all. May God protect our troops. And may God bless the heroes of Ukraine and all those who defend freedom around the world.

Thank you, Poland. Thank you, thank you, thank you for what you're doing. God bless you all.

Joe Biden

Remarks given at Vilnius University on Supporting Ukraine,
Defending Democratic Values, and Taking Action to Address Global Challenges

12.07.2023

Hello, Lithuania!

As my mother would say, “God love ya.” No seats. Holy mackerel.

It’s good to be back in Vilnius, a nation and a region that knows better than anyone the transformational power of freedom. You know, you showed the world that the strength of a people united cannot be denied. And together, with your brothers and sisters in Estonia and Latvia, you helped end the era of division through the power of connection. The Baltic Way, not the Berlin Wall, became the symbol for Europe’s future.

And later, when Soviet tanks sought once more to deny your independence, the people of Vilnius said, “No.” No, no, no. And in January of 1991, tens of thousands of citizens, unarmed and unyielding, came for their own — of their own accord, standing as one to protect the TV Tower, to shield the Supreme Council, and to defend freedom. Fourteen heroes tragically lost their lives. Hundreds were wounded. But the whole world saw that decades of oppression had done nothing to dim the flame of liberty in this country. I mean it. It’s consequential.

The light of Lithuania: You kept it strong. You kept it bright. And you kept the light shining here in Vilnius and in Washington, D.C., where the yellow, green, and red of your flag flew every day. This past year, we have celebrated 100 years of unbroken diplomatic relationship between the United States and the Baltic states. America — America never recognized the Soviet occupation of the Baltics. Never, never, never, Mr. President. And besides, you’ve got a great president. Stand up. No, stand up. As your president can yell you, the bonds between Lithuanian and the American people have never faltered.

And just — just seven months after the bloody January crackdown, the first foreign vivistor [sic] — first foreign visitor to have their passports stamped here in Lithuania with visas of this — to this new, reborn state were a planeload of Lithuanian Americans from Chicago, Illinois. Oh. And their families are still proud of that.

AUDIENCE MEMBER: From Los Angeles.

THE PRESIDENT: Los Angeles came after that. A lot came after. Look, many aboard that plane had fled Lithuania during the early years of Soviet oppression and marveled — marveled at their return to this independent state. One of them told reporters, quote, “This day is like a resurrection for us.” “This day, Father, is like a resurrection for us.” That’s what the quote was, for real. That’s the feeling. And it was — a resurrection that quickly became a revelation. And a nation which stands today as a stronghold of liberty

and opportunity, a proud member of the European Union and of NATO. I had the great honor as a United States senator of championing Lithuania and other Baltic states to join NATO in 2004. Wasn't I brilliant doing that?

But all kidding aside, think about what it — how it's changed things. Think about what's happened. Now, over the last few days, as President of the United States, I had the honor of participating in a historic NATO Summit hosted by Lithuania, where we welcomed NATO's newest Ally, Finland, and reached agreement to bring Sweden into the Alliance as soon as possible. And President Erdoğan kept his word.

We have witnessed your historic journey. And I'm proud to call Lithuania a friend, partner, and Ally. Ally. Ally. Soon, NATO will be the 32nd freestanding — have free — 33 — 32 freestanding members — (laughter) — standing together to defend our people and our territory, beyond — beyond all the rest, bound by democratic values to make us strong and by our sacred oath that an attack against — it is a sacred oath — attack against one is an attack against all. Because each member of NATO knows that the strength of our people and the power of our unity cannot be denied. If I sound optimistic, it's because I am.

Today, our Alliance remains a bulwark of global security and stability as it's been for more than seven decades. NATO is stronger, more energized, and, yes, more united than ever in its history. Indeed, more vital to our shared future. It didn't happen by accident. It wasn't inevitable. When Putin, and his craven lust for land and power, unleashed his brutal war on Ukraine, he was betting NATO would break apart. He was betting NATO would break. He thought our unity would shatter at the first testing. He thought democratic leaders would be weak. But he thought wrong. Faced with a threat, faced with a threat to the peace and stability of the world, to democratic values we hold dear, to freedom itself, we did what we always do: The United States stepped up. NATO stepped up. Our partners in Europe, in the In- — and then the Indo-Pacific stepped up. All across the world they stepped up.

And we're ready — we were ready because we stood together. In the months leading up to the war, as Putin amassed his forces on the Ukrainian border and laid the groundwork for his brutal invasion, it wa- — I was in constant contact with my fellow leaders of the G7 and the European Union and NATO, constantly. We warned the world what Putin was planning. Even some in Ukraine didn't believe we were — what we had — our intelligence community found. We made sure NATO was prepared to deter any aggression against any member state. We pursued intense diplomacy with Russia, seeking to avert this terrible war. And when Russian bombs began to fall, we did not hesitate to act.

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We rallied the world to support the brave people of Ukraine as they defend their liberty and their sovereignty with incredible dignity. I mean that from the bottom of my heart. Think about it. Think about what they're doing. After nearly a year and a half of Russia's forces committing terrible atrocities, including crimes against humanity, the people of Ukraine remain unbroken. Unbroken. Ukraine remains independent. It remains free. And the United States has built a coalition of more than 50 nations to make sure Ukraine defends itself both now and is able to do it in the future as well.

Since this war began, I've stood with President Zelenskyy — as I just spent about an hour with him — both in Washington, in Kyiv, in Hi- — in Hiroshima, and now in Vilnius, to declare to the world what I say again: We will not waver. We will not waver. I mean that. Our commitment to Ukraine will not weaken. We will stand for liberty and freedom today, tomorrow, and for as long as it takes.

We all want this war to end on just terms — terms that uphold the basic principles of the United Nations Charter that we all signed up to: sovereignty, territorial integrity. These are two pillars of peaceful relations among nations. One country cannot be allowed to seize its neighbor's territory by force. Russia could end this war tomorrow by withdrawing its forces from Ukraine, recognize these international borders, and ceasing its attacks on its — inhumane attacks on Russia — I mean, by Russia on Ukraine, against its children — women and children; its military.

Unfortunately, Russia has shown thus far no interest in a diplomatic outcome. Putin still wrongly believes that he can outlast Ukraine. He can't believe it's their land, their country, and their future. And even after all this time, Putin still doubts our staying power. He's still making a bad bet that the conviction and the unity among the United States and our Allies and partners will break down. He still doesn't understand that our commitment to our values, our freedom is something he [we] can never, never, ever, ever walk away from. It's who we are. I mean it — it's who we are. It's who we are.

Throughout this horrific war, the people of Lithuania, together with our Baltic brethren, have been among the fiercest champ- — most fiercest champions of Ukraine's right to a future of its own choosing: one that is free. Because you lived so long with freedom denied, many of you who are older know better than anyone how precious the right to determine your own future is, precious to people everywhere — everywhere — not just in Ukraine, but Belarus, Moldova, Georgia — in all the places around the world where people continue to fight to make their voices heard.

So, my message — my message to all of you tonight is: Keep it up. Keep it going. Keep reminding the world of hope that Lithuania embodies. And that's what you embody: hope in this country. No, I really mean it. I'm not joking. I mean this sincerely. We must never forget how much this matters and never, never give up on a better tomorrow. The

defense of freedom is not the work of a day or a year. It's the calling of our lifetime, of all time. We are steeled for the struggle ahead. Our unity will not falter. I promise you.

Folks, as I look around the world today, at a moment of war and peril, a moment of competition and uncertainty, I also see a moment of unprecedented opportunity — unprecedented opportunity — opportunity to make real strides toward a world of greater peace and greater prosperity, liberty and dignity, equal justice under the law, human rights and fundamental freedoms which are the blessing and birthright of all of humanity. That — that is the world the United States is working toward. And it's one we'll only reach if we do it together — and I mean together. We need to take the same spirit of unity, common purpose, determination that we have demonstrated in our response to Russian aggression in Ukraine and bring more partners along as we continue working to build a world we want to live in and a world we want for our children.

My friends, at the most fundamental level, we face a choice — it's not a hyperbole — we face a choice: a choice between a world defined by coercion and exploitation, where might makes right, or a world where we recognize that our own success is bound to the success of others. When others do better, we do better as well — where we understand that the challenges we face today, from the existential threat of climate change to building a global economy where no one gets left behind, are too great for any one nation to solve on their own, and that to achieve our goals and meet the challenges of this age, we have to work together. And I mean this sincerely: The world is changing. We have a chance to change the dynamic.

That's why I've been so focused as president on rebuilding and revitalizing the alliances that are the cornerstone of American leadership in the world. These past years, we have brought the Transatlantic Partnership to new heights, reaffirming the importance of the relationship between Europe and the United States as an anchor to global stability. The idea that the United States could prosper without a secure Europe is not reasonable.

We've also elevated — (audience members clap) — that's — it really isn't. Not a joke. I sometimes — well — we also elevated and deepened America's alliance in the Indo-Pacific with Japan, the Republic of Korea, Australia, and the Philippines, which provide critical security and deterrence in that vital region of the world.

Through our Quad partnership — it's a fancy way of saying our partnership with Australia, India, Japan, and the United States — we're bringing major democracies of the region together to cooperate, keeping the Indo-Pacific free and open, prosperous, and secure. We've demonstrated during this NATO Summit, with In- — with Indo-Pacific partners joining us for the second year in a row, we're working to deepen connections between the Atlantic and Pacific democracies so they can better work together toward

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the shared values we all seek: strong alliances, versatile partnerships, common purpose, collective action to meet our shared challenges.

The world has shrunk. That's how we build a future to see. But we share and know we share challenges and work together. We have to step up together, building the broadest and deepest coalition to strengthen and defend the basic rules of the road, to preserve all the extraordinary benefits that stem from the international system grounded in the rule of law. We have to come together to protect the rights and freedoms that underwrite the flow of ideas and commerce and which have enabled decades of global growth. Yes, territorial integrity and sovereignty, but also principles like freedom of navigation and overflight, keeping our shared seas and skies open so that every nation has equal access to our global common space.

[...] ²⁴

God bless you all, and may God protect the freedoms of the — the protectors of freedom in Ukraine, here, in every nation in the world, everywhere. God protect our troops.

Thank you, thank you, thank you.

²⁴ On globalisation, innovations and climate changes and need of global cooperation to challenge them.

Mitch McConnell, Senator, Senate Republican Leader

Speech at the Senate on Defence Help to Ukraine

11.09.2023

As I discussed last week, skeptics of American leadership like to hang their hats on the notion that support for Ukraine somehow saps our ability to compete with and deter communist China. This view does not hold up to serious scrutiny. For one thing, the patina of hawkishness on China is too often just a mask for isolationism. If critics of U.S. support for Ukraine disparage the principle that we should oppose adversaries who invade and destroy western-aligned neighbors, how credible is their commitment to defend Taiwan or other vulnerable allies?

Of course, this isn't a debate about abstract principles or philanthropy. The United States isn't arming Ukraine out of a sense of charity. We are backing a fellow democracy because it is in our direct interest to do so. To rebut one ad hominem accusation in particular, there is nothing 'neo-conservative' about support for Ukraine. Helping a democratic partner defend its sovereign territory against an unprovoked attack from a common enemy is obviously in America's interest. "And let me stress: we aren't defending Ukraine from aggression; the Ukrainians are doing that.

America's two most powerful adversaries have struck up a 'friendship without limits'. If we fail to help Ukraine stop Russia in its tracks, there is every reason to believe Russia and China will both be emboldened. Our closest allies and partners in Asia – people with even more to lose from PRC aggression than armchair isolationists here in Washington – understand this fundamental reality. It's why Taiwan provides humanitarian assistance in Ukraine. It's why the leaders of Japan and South Korea have traveled to Kyiv and pledged billions of dollars in assistance. Our partners in Europe and Asia are joining us in investing in our military readiness and expanding our defense production capacity. If not for the conflict in Ukraine, it is difficult to imagine any of this happening.

Republicans should welcome Democrats who are finally willing to spend money on our defense industrial base. Such a bipartisan consensus will not survive if we turn our backs on this conflict. And why would we pull the plug on the Trans-Atlantic Alliance just when European allies are making credible investments in their own defenses and also coming around to share our concerns about Chinese aggression?

Competition with China is a global proposition. And the strength of our closest military and economic allies in Europe affects China's calculus. Beijing would love to see the trans-Atlantic alliance fracture in the wake of America turning our back on our closest trading partner. If the United States proves we cannot be trusted to back our

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allies in Europe, why on Earth should our allies in Asia expect different treatment in the face of Chinese aggression?

So Mr. President, war in Ukraine has taught the West a crucial lesson about the importance of investments in defense industrial capacity. And as I discussed last week, it's directed billions and billions of dollars toward restocking America's arsenal with American weapons built here by American workers. This is a fundamental prerequisite for competition with China. And we're accomplishing it using a tiny fraction of the historically small and insufficient defense budgets President Biden has sent to Congress. Put another way, America is making urgent strides in the race to compete with our biggest adversary, China. And in the process, we're helping degrade Russian military strength and encouraging our allies to Buy American and invest in their own defense.

This is American leadership. And Republicans should be pressing President Biden to show more of it instead of dreaming about American retreat.

Antony J. Blinken

Remarks at the UN Security Council meeting
about famine and conflict-induced global food insecurity

3.08.2023

[...] ²⁵

Once again, I thank our briefers for keeping our focus on what is really at stake here, that is, the human element in our discussions. It is easy to get caught up in numbers, statistics and big concepts, but ultimately it comes down to people and it comes down to children. I therefore thank them for that focus and for their focus on practical solutions to the problems before us. All three of them have powerfully illustrated the challenge before us, but even more important, they have given us very good ideas for how to actually address that challenge.

Last September, President Biden told the General Assembly, “In every country in the world ... if parents cannot feed their children, nothing else matters”. In some ways, it is as simple and as stark as that. Too many families are experiencing the overwhelming urgency, the consequence of an unprecedented global food crisis that, as we have heard, has been fuelled by climate and the coronavirus disease, as well as by conflict, as we have discussed today.

Hunger and conflict are inextricably linked, with scarce resources and heightened tensions affecting communities and nations. Warring parties weaponize food to subjugate local populations. Indeed, conflict is the largest single driver of food insecurity, with violence and unrest pushing 117 million people into extreme deprivation last year. In the Sudan, fighting has disrupted the summer planting season and driven up the cost of food. In Myanmar, where one in five people — one in five — are severely undernourished, the military regime is making the problem worse in order to tighten its grip, including by blocking aid convoys. The deteriorating conditions have prevented the safe return of the nearly 1 million Rohingya refugees who have fled their homeland and now live in Bangladesh on rations that are down to about 27 cents per day. In Yemen, some families have reported resorting to boiling leaves to stay alive. They call it famine food. Unless the world acts, Burkina Faso, South Sudan and Somalia could all experience famine next year. Again, I ask all of us to pause for a moment and think about what that actually means, and to imagine, just for a minute, that these are their children, their sons, their daughters. We have heard the compelling descriptions of what that is actually all about, and I hope that if nothing else, having that image in our minds and tying it to our own life experiences will give us some added motivation to act.

²⁵ Formal appeal about an order of the discussion.

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[...] ²⁶

Finally, we must address Russia's war of aggression against Ukraine and the resulting assault on the global food system. During the past year, the Black Sea Grain Initiative, negotiated by the United Nations and Türkiye, delivered more than 32 million tons of Ukrainian foodstuffs to the world. The wheat exports alone were the equivalent of 18 billion loaves of bread. We should keep in mind that the Initiative never should have been necessary in the first place. That was only because of Russia's invasion of Ukraine and its blockade of Ukrainian ports. But the Initiative produced concrete, demonstrable and powerful results, making sure that those food products could continue to reach world markets and those who needed them.

Let us be very clear about who benefited from the Initiative. More than half of the food products exported through the effort, and two thirds of the wheat, went to developing countries. The shipments helped to lower global food prices for everyone by roughly a quarter after Russia's full-scale invasion. Since 17 July, when Russia pulled out of the arrangement, ignoring the world's appeals, grain prices have risen by more than 8 per cent around the globe. Kenya's Foreign Ministry called Russia's move "a stab in the back". The Kremlin claims that it tore up the deal because international sanctions were restricting its agricultural exports. In reality, sanctions explicitly exclude food and fertilizer. In fact, at the time it abandoned the Initiative, Russia was exporting more grain at higher prices than ever before.

What has Russia's response been to the world's distress and outrage? It has bombed Ukrainian granaries, mined port entrances and threatened to attack any vessel in the Black Sea whatever its flag or cargo. Those actions are consistent with Russia's decision last month to block the reauthorization of critical cross-border humanitarian assistance to Syria — a country where after February's devastating earthquake, 12 million people do not have enough to eat. The United States is prepared to renew the efforts to mandate that vital lifeline if the United Nations and Syria cannot find a way forward. We also very much appreciate the work that Türkiye and others are doing to try to reinstate the grain deal. Every member of the Council and every State Member of the United Nations should tell Moscow that enough is enough. Enough of using the Black Sea as blackmail, enough of treating the world's most vulnerable people as leverage and enough of its unjustified, unconscionable war.

Strengthening food security is essential to realizing the vision of the Charter of the United Nations for saving generations from the scourge of war and reaffirming the dignity and worth of every single human being. That hope is embodied in one of the statues outside this building, which is a figure fulfilling the biblical directive to beat swords into

²⁶ About U.S. tackle hunger.

ploughshares. Those words of Scripture are not yet in reach, but we can at least commit to not using our swords to destroy others' ploughs. We can deliver life-saving aid to those in urgent need. We can ensure that people around the globe are fed, now and for years to come. If we do that — if we build a healthier, more stable, more peaceful world for all — we will at least have begun to live up to the responsibility entrusted to us, to the Council and to this institution.

I now resume my functions as President of the Security Council. I give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements.

Victoria Nuland, Under Secretary of State

Remarks on the Two-Year Anniversary of Russia's Full-Scale Invasion of Ukraine at Center for Security and International Studies (CSIS)

22.02.2024

Thank you, Max, it is very good to be here with you at CSIS; and thanks to CSIS for decades of incisive research and recommendations for policymakers. I have been a beneficiary myself over many decades. And thanks to everyone who is joining us both in-person and virtually.

Well as Max made clear, we all remember where we were two years ago in the months, and days, and hours leading up to Putin's February 24th, 2022 full-scale invasion of Ukraine. U.S. intelligence, and indeed CSIS's own reports, had been warning for months about Putin's massive war plan and the terrible toll that could await Ukraine. Week after week in the winter of 2021/2022, we watched the Russian military take up positions on three sides of Ukraine. The U.S., as you'll remember, offered negotiations to try to avert Russia's planned invasion, but those negotiations sputtered quickly, because Putin had already made up his mind. Yet at that time, many still hoped the troop movements were just a pressure tactic, even some Ukrainians believed that.

But many feared that if Putin did order his troops in, Russia's massive military could roll over Kyiv within a week, decapitate Ukraine's democratic government, and install puppets of Moscow. But that did not happen. Instead, Putin got Newton's third law, an equal and opposite reaction to everything he hoped to gain:

Instead of fleeing, President Zelensky led; Instead of capitulating, Ukrainians fought; Instead of fracturing, the West united; and Instead of shrinking, NATO grew.

The U.S. rallied the world to Ukraine's defense in those early hours, days, and weeks, and we have kept that global coalition of more than 50 nations united for two years standing strongly with Ukraine. The U.S. has provided \$75 billion dollars in security, economic, and humanitarian assistance. Europe and our global partners have provided even more—\$107 billion in addition to hosting 4.5 million Ukrainian refugees in countries across Europe. And the EU just pledged another \$54 billion for Ukraine. Today, NATO is stronger, larger, and better resourced. Finland has joined the defensive alliance, and we'll welcome Sweden very soon.

Russia is globally isolated. Over 140 nations voted four times in the UN General Assembly to condemn Putin's brutal invasion. And now Putin is reliant on countries like Iran and North Korea for weapons, while he drives his country deeper and deeper into economic and security arms of China. Global sanctions, the oil-price-cap, and export controls have weakened Russia's war machine, and these restrictions will get

significantly tighter in the coming days as we and our partners announce massive new sanctions packages designed, among other goals, to strangle Russia's effort at sanctions evasion.

In less than two years, Europe broke its dependency on Russian oil, and the U.S. doubled liquified natural gas exports across the Atlantic, helping European partners reduce their dependence on Russian gas from 40% of total consumption to just 13% today.

And despite all the immense challenges from Putin's vicious war machine, Ukraine has survived. Ukraine has retaken more than 50% of the territory seized by Putin's forces at beginning of the invasion; It has pushed Russia's Black Sea Fleet out of Sevastopol and off Ukraine's coast allowing Ukraine to restore grain exports to pre-war levels, helping feed the world once again; And, remarkably, Ukraine's economy grew by 5% last year, albeit from a pretty low war-torn base. And in case Americans are still asking themselves, if all of this is worth it for us, let's remember:

Without sending a single U.S. soldier into combat, and investing less than one tenth of one year's defense budget, we have helped Ukraine destroy 50% of Russia's ground combat power and 20% of its vaunted Black Sea Fleet. Ukraine has taken off the battlefield 21 naval ships, 102 Russian aircraft, and 2,700 Russian tanks. By every measure, Ukraine's bravery and strength, its resilience, has made the United States safer too. More broadly, our continued support for Ukraine tells tyrants and autocrats everywhere:

That we will not stand by while the UN Charter is torn to shreds; That we will defend the rights of free people to determine their own future, and to protect their sovereignty and territorial integrity; And that the world's democracies will defend the values and principals that keep us safe and strong.

But on Ukraine's frontlines, unless and until the U.S. joins Europe in passing our supplemental funding request, the situation remains dire. Artillerymen are fighting with only 10-20 155mm shells per day to defend themselves; Ukraine, as we saw on the news, has been forced to withdraw from Avdiivka; Kharkiv—one of Ukraine's proudest Eastern cities—is bombarded daily; And Ukraine's economy is still fragile with almost 100% of tax revenue going to defense now.

Valdimir Putin—in addition to planning anti-satellite weapons in space and bearing responsibility for the death of his most popular opponent, Alexei Navalny—thinks he can wait Ukraine out, and he thinks he can wait out all of us. We need to prove him wrong.

With the \$60 billion supplemental that the Administration has requested of Congress, we can ensure Ukraine not only survives but thrives. With this support, in 2024, we will can help ensure Ukraine can continue to fight, to build, to recover, and to reform. With this money, Ukraine will be able to fight back in the East and accelerate the asymmetric warfare that his been most effective on the battlefield. And as I said in Kyiv three weeks

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ago, this supplemental funding will ensure Putin faces some nasty surprises on the battlefield this year.

Ukraine can also build. With this money, the U.S. will join 31 other nations in helping Ukraine build the highly deterrent military that it needs to ensure Putin can never come back and do this again. And it will also rebuild its indigenous industrial base and ensure that it can remain on a path to European integration. This support also ensures Ukraine can begin to recover economically and strengthen its tax base by investing in clean energy, in grains and agriculture, steel, defense infrastructure, and in getting internally displaced persons and refugees home to better jobs and safety. One interesting thing is that Patriot systems and other sophisticated air defense systems not only provide battlefield protection, but, as we've seen in Kyiv and Odessa, they create bubbles of safety under which citizens can live safely and Ukraine's economy can rejuvenate. They give people the confidence to come home.

This money also supports continued reform, strengthening governance, the judiciary, and draining the grey economy—so that Ukraine can attract foreign investment—and continuing progress on rule of law, accountability, and anti-corruption—all the things that the Ukrainian people have demanded of their government since the 2013 revolution of dignity and before. Our supplemental support will strengthen the Ukraine of today, but also put it on a more sustainable path for tomorrow.

And by the way, most of the support we are providing actually goes right back into the U.S. economy and defense industrial base—helping to modernize and scale our own vital defense infrastructure while creating American jobs and economic growth. In fact, the first \$75 billion created good-paying jobs in at least 40 states across the U.S. and 90% of this next request will do the same.

In December of 2022, I was in Ukraine on one of the many trips I've made in the last couple years, including four trips since the war began. I visited a center in Kyiv, that the U.S. supports, which helps Ukrainian children that have been displaced by the war. There I met a young boy from Kharkiv, with bright eyes and a sweet smile, who had just lost his home to Putin's barbarity. As part of a therapy session, he and a handful of other kids his age were making little knit dolls out of yellow and blue yarn. Before leaving I asked him if I could keep one. "Da," he said. I then asked what the doll's name was. "Patriot," he answered. It was quiet a moment—a child making a doll, who just lost his home, thinking about patriotism. That's what war brings. To Ukraine and around the world. I now keep Patriot on my desk as a reminder that the support that the United States provides is not abstract. It's often the difference between life and death for Ukrainians on the front lines of this fight for Ukraine, and for the future of the free world.

It's a reminder that when Putin launched this vicious campaign, with its war crimes and nuclear blackmail, he not only shattered life for Ukrainians—from Kharkiv to Kyiv to Kherson, from Dnipro to Donetsk, from Lviv to Odessa—but he laid bare the consequences of appeasing tyrants who are intent on conquest. And here I will be blunt: we can't allow Putin to succeed in his plan to erase Ukraine from the map of free nations. And if Putin wins in Ukraine, he will not stop there, and autocrats everywhere will feel emboldened to change the status quo by force.

And for the U.S., the price of defending the free and open international order that we depend on, will go up exponentially. Democracies everywhere will be imperiled. Support for Ukraine is not simply a “nice to have,” it is a vital strategic investment in our own future.

Thanks Max and I look forward to our conversation.

Joe Biden

Statement ahead of the Two-Year Anniversary
of Russia's Brutal Assault Against Ukraine

23.02.2024

Two years ago tomorrow, shortly before dawn, Russian missiles began exploding near the capital city of Kyiv. Russian troops marched across the border into Ukraine. Vladimir Putin's vicious onslaught against Ukraine had begun.

He believed that he could easily bend the will and break the resolve of a free people. That he could roll into a sovereign nation, and the world would roll over. That he could shake the foundations of security in Europe and beyond.

Two years later, we see even more vividly what we've known since day one: Putin miscalculated badly.

The brave people of Ukraine fight on, unbowed in their determination to defend their freedom and future. NATO is stronger, larger, and more united than ever. And the unprecedented 50-nation global coalition in support of Ukraine, led by the United States, remains committed to providing critical assistance to Ukraine and holding Russia accountable for its aggression.

The American people and people around the world understand that the stakes of this fight extend far beyond Ukraine. Ten years ago, Putin occupied Crimea, and created puppet regimes in Ukraine's Luhansk and Donetsk regions. Two years ago, he tried to wipe Ukraine off the map. If Putin does not pay the price for his death and destruction, he will keep going. And the costs to the United States—along with our NATO Allies and partners in Europe and around the world—will rise.

Today, I am announcing more than 500 new sanctions against Russia for its ongoing war of conquest on Ukraine and for the death of Aleksey Navalny, who was a courageous anti-corruption activist and Putin's fiercest opposition leader. These sanctions will target individuals connected to Navalny's imprisonment as well as Russia's financial sector, defense industrial base, procurement networks and sanctions evaders across multiple continents. They will ensure Putin pays an even steeper price for his aggression abroad and repression at home.

We are also imposing new export restrictions on nearly 100 entities for providing backdoor support for Russia's war machine. We are taking action to further reduce Russia's energy revenues. And I've directed my team to strengthen support for civil society, independent media, and those who fight for democracy around the world.

Two years into this war, the people of Ukraine continue to fight with tremendous courage. But they are running out of ammunition. Ukraine needs more supplies

from the United States to hold the line against Russia's relentless attacks, which are enabled by arms and ammunition from Iran and North Korea. That's why the House of Representatives must pass the bipartisan national security supplemental bill, before it's too late.

This bill provides urgent funding for Ukraine. It also invests in America's own defense industrial base. It passed overwhelmingly in the Senate, and there is no question that, if the Speaker called a vote, it would pass quickly in the House. Congress knows that by supporting this bill, we can strengthen security in Europe, strengthen our security at home, and stand up to Putin. Opposing this bill only plays into his hands.

History is watching. The failure to support Ukraine at this critical moment will not be forgotten. Now is the time for us to stand strong with Ukraine and stand united with our Allies and partners. Now is the time to prove that the United States stands up for freedom and bows down to no one.

APPENDIX

RUSSIA

Vladimir Putin, President

Speech at Expanded meeting of the Foreign Ministry Board

18.11.2021

Mr [Serghei] Lavrov, colleagues,

I would like to welcome everyone here to the expanded meeting of the Foreign Ministry Board. Today, our agenda is focused on the implementation of Russia's foreign policy and priority tasks for the future, taking into account the adopted amendments to the Constitution, which also concern foreign policy.

Importantly, our Fundamental Law has now sealed such basic ideas and values as loyalty to the homeland, respect for our native tongue, history, culture and traditions of our predecessors. This is everything that unites our people around common ideals and determines the vector for the development of the sovereign, independent and peace-loving Russian state, an active member of the international community.

We will also fix the specific areas of foreign policy, of our diplomatic work in today's difficult international conditions in the new version of the Foreign Policy Concept that is now being drafted. This document, along with the National Security Strategy endorsed this summer, will, actually, become a roadmap for the Foreign Ministry and other ministries and departments.

The main thing is that our foreign policy should continue ensuring the most comfortable and secure conditions for Russia's development, resolving ambitious socioeconomic tasks and improving the living standards of our people.

With this in mind, Russia is committed to developing partnership and mutually beneficial constructive relations with all countries and regional associations. We will proactively participate in international efforts to counter common challenges and threats which, unfortunately, still include terrorism and cross-border crime, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, poverty, inequality, climate change and environmental degradation.

As a permanent member of the UN Security Council, Russia is set to continue to firmly uphold the fundamental principles enshrined in the UN Charter such as sovereignty and equality of states, non-interference in their internal affairs, fair settlement of disputes and of course, the key role of the UN in addressing international problems.

Our proposal to hold a summit of states – permanent members of the UN Security Council, which bear special responsibility for maintaining international peace and stability, is in line with this principled approach.

[...] ²⁷

²⁷ About Russian struggle with COVID-19 pandemic and climate changes, but also countering climate agenda of the EU and U.S.

RUSSIA

Regarding other priorities for the diplomatic service, I would like to mention the need to pay more attention to strengthening ties with our compatriots abroad, protecting their interests and preserving pan-Russian cultural identity, as well as to simplifying the procedures for granting Russian citizenship to them. Yes, I realise that this problem is at the junction of several ministries and departments, but the Foreign Ministry should also deal with this. In general, we should map out the best ways for using the creative potential of the millions of Russians around the world.

Obviously, it is necessary to continue creating an atmosphere of friendship, security and cooperation in the post-Soviet space. To achieve this, we need to expand our relations with our partners in the Commonwealth of Independent States, with whom we are bonded by historical, cultural and simply human ties.

The Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) is a key integration association. The EAEU goal is to create a common market for goods and services, capital and workforce. Consistent promotion of integration is already producing results for the participating states, driving their economic growth and helping improve the wellbeing of their citizens. We should use such achievements to involve new members and partners in the orbit of this organisation.

Considering the risks and challenges arising along the perimeter of our borders, we should pay special attention to joint efforts with our allies in the Collective Security Treaty Organisation (CSTO). In the last few decades, the CSTO has seriously contributed to the maintenance of stability in Eurasia. We should steadily promote our cooperation in the CSTO and use it in practice for the reliable protection of the national interests, sovereignty and independence of its members.

We should also enhance, through practical actions, our partnership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). This is one of the most influential centres in the multi-polar world, multi-polar international architecture. It is substantially facilitating stability and a sustainable socioeconomic growth in Eurasia. It is in our interests to achieve closer foreign policy coordination between its members, primarily in the UN, and other international venues.

Of course, we will develop cooperation in BRICS in the same vein. BRICS brings over 40 percent of the world's population together and occupies more than a quarter of the Earth's land area. BRICS should play a bigger role in international affairs and match the growing potential of its participants.

Colleagues,

Traditionally, our diplomacy is actively involved in settling regional conflicts. Unfortunately, the number of these conflicts and crisis situations around the world is multiplying, requiring more attention and swift response.

Of course, Ukraine's internal crisis is among the most pressing and sensitive issues for us, which has so far remained unresolved. Demonstratively, Ukraine has failed to fulfil its obligations under the Minsk Package of Measures, as well as the Normandy format agreements. In other words, our Normandy Quartet partners – Germany and France – do not dispute the importance of the Minsk agreements. By the way, we must not forget that the Minsk agreements have become a norm of international law since the UN Security Council adopted the relevant resolutions. Unfortunately, in reality, [Germany and France] are indulging the current Kiev leadership's course on dismantling the [Minsk agreements], which, unfortunately, has led the talks and the settlement itself into a dead end.

Nonetheless, it is important to energetically continue the mediation efforts in the Contact Group and the Normandy format, since there are no other international mechanisms to promote an internal Ukrainian settlement, and there is no alternative to implementing the Minsk agreements in full.

Importantly, our Western partners are exacerbating the situation by supplying Kiev with modern lethal weapons, conducting provocative military exercises in the Black Sea and other regions close to our borders. With regard to the Black Sea, this even goes beyond certain limits since strategic bombers, which carry very serious weapons, fly at a distance of only 20 kilometres from our state border.

Indeed, we constantly express our concerns about these matters and talk about red lines, but of course, we understand that our partners are peculiar in the sense that they have a very – how to put it mildly – superficial approach to our warnings about red lines. We remember well NATO's eastward expansion – the audience here is quite representative and professional. Despite the fact that relations between Russia and our Western partners, including the United States, were nothing short of unique, and the level of relations was almost allied, our concerns and warnings regarding NATO's eastward expansion have been totally ignored.

There have been several waves of expansion, and let's look at where the military infrastructure of the NATO bloc is now – anti-missile defence systems have been deployed right next to our borders in Romania and Poland. These can easily be put to offensive use with the Mk-41 launchers there; replacing the software takes only minutes. Nevertheless, our recent warnings have had a certain effect: tensions have arisen there anyway.

In this regard, I have two points to make. First, it is important for them to remain in this state for as long as possible, so that it does not occur to them to stage some kind of conflict on our western borders which we do not need, we do not need a new conflict.

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Second, Mr Lavrov, it is imperative to push for serious long-term guarantees that ensure Russia's security in this area, because Russia cannot constantly be thinking about what could happen there tomorrow.

Clearly, and I can see this despite the fact that many people are wearing face masks, but I can tell by their eyes that there are sceptical smiles with regard to whether we can count on and hope for serious agreements in this area, keeping in mind that, after all, we are dealing with, to put it mildly, not very reliable partners who can easily backtrack on any previous agreement. Nevertheless, as difficult as it may be, we need to work on this, and I want you to keep that in mind.

It is also impossible to ignore that Western countries are using the migration crisis on Belarus-Poland border as a new reason for tension in a region close to us, for putting pressure on Minsk, while at the same time forgetting their own humanitarian commitments. Just look how the Polish security forces are behaving at the border – you can watch it on the internet or on television. The first thing that comes to mind is those poor children, there are small children there. And they are shooting water and tear gas at the crowd, throwing grenades. At night, helicopters fly along the border, sirens are howling.

I remember well how in 2014, when the Polish government, trying to stop the use of similar equipment by law enforcement forces in Ukraine – [Viktor] Yanukovych was President then – how they said it was unacceptable to use such means against the civilian population. What are they doing now?

Indeed, we know and understand that Belarus has its problems, although domestic political tensions have calmed down, but the problems exist, and yes, we are well aware of this and we certainly support a dialogue between the authorities and the opposition. But Russia, for its part, will undoubtedly continue its policy of strengthening ties and deepening integration with Belarus. We are determined to implement all 28 recently adopted Union State industry programmes to develop a common economic space, and go on to pursue coordinated macroeconomic, tax, banking and credit policies.

A year ago, Russia's vigorous mediation efforts helped curb the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, but the recent shootings on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border have shown that the region has not yet fully stabilised. The efforts of the Russian peacekeeping contingent, as a guarantor of the ceasefire and the civilian population's security, are essential to ensure stability.

Undoubtedly, Russian diplomacy is playing a growing role in further efforts to settle disputes between Azerbaijan and Armenia, restore economic ties and unblock vital transport corridors in the South Caucasus. We have established an interstate commission at the level of deputy prime ministers. It is working, and I think it has good prospects.

All countries of the region, including Russia, are interested in the long-term resolution of these problems.

There are serious challenges with respect to Afghanistan, especially after the US withdrawal from that country. In further contacts with the Taliban, it is necessary to make more active use of the formats of the Moscow consultations and the consultations of the extended “Troika” with the participation of external players and neighbours of Afghanistan with a view to promoting civil peace and public order, neutralising terrorist structures and drug crime.

Developments in Afghanistan dictate the need for additional measures to ensure Russia’s security on its southern borders and provide assistance to our allies – Central Asian states that consider Russia to be a guarantor of regional stability. It is necessary to continue acting in this vein, taking measures to prevent uncontrollable refugee flows and stop terrorists and other criminals from crossing our border.

Colleagues,

We have repeatedly noted the centre of gravity of the world’s politics and economy steadily shift from the Euro-Atlantic to the Asia-Pacific. So, we should continue vigorously developing relations with the states of the Asia-Pacific Region, being guided by our ambitious initiative to create the Greater Eurasian Partnership as a common, broad and open space of security, mutually beneficial economic and humanitarian cooperation.

We will continue strengthening ties with our good neighbours and friends in the People’s Republic of China. Our bilateral ties have now reached the highest level in history and amount to a comprehensive strategic partnership. It is possible to say that they are a model for effective interstate cooperation in the 21st century.

Naturally, this is not to the liking of everyone. Some of our Western partners are openly trying to drive a wedge between Moscow and Beijing. We are well aware of this. Together with our Chinese friends, we will continue responding to such attempts by expanding our political, economic and other cooperation, and coordinating steps in the world arena.

Russia has a similar approach in relations with India, our specially privileged strategic partner. We intend to build up our truly multifaceted bilateral cooperation. We regard India as an independent, strong centre of the multipolar world. We have a similar foreign policy philosophy and priorities.

Cooperation between Russia and ASEAN contributes to maintaining stability and security, as well as ensures sustainable development in the Asia-Pacific. It is important to deepen and improve, in every possible way, the experience we have accumulated over 30 years of productive political, economic and social cooperation with ASEAN.

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It is equally important to maintain the intensive work with our partners in the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation forum, consistently implementing existing initiatives for post-pandemic economic recovery, stimulating trade in goods and services, investment and technological exchange, and expanding humanitarian contacts.

Russia has always acted and will continue to act as an impartial mediator to resolve conflicts and crises in the Middle East and help stabilise that region in every possible way. Our direct involvement contributed to defeating international terrorism in Syria, preventing the country from disintegrating, and to launching the intra-Syrian settlement process under the auspices of the UN, as part of the Astana format with Turkey and Iran.

Russian diplomacy should continue to contribute to the normalisation of relations between Syria and the Arab countries and an early return to the League of Arab States, as well as to enlist international assistance to improve the humanitarian situation in that country.

Assisting in the advancement of the Israeli-Palestinian peace process is of fundamental importance for the improvement of the situation in the Middle East. We need to continue balanced and purposeful work with all parties to the Libyan conflict, to direct them towards finding a compromise. Overall, forging a truly friendly, pragmatic and non-ideology based dialogue with all states in the Middle East remains our unconditional priority.

Russia intends to continue to focus on cooperating with the African states, building comprehensive and mutually beneficial ties. By the way, this was the purpose of a recent decision to strengthen the staff of the Africa Department at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. As you know, in 2019, Sochi hosted the first Russia-Africa summit; the parties are exploring the possibility of holding the next meeting in 2022.

With regard to Latin American and Caribbean countries, this region has always been interested in cooperating with Russia, and interest is growing, especially in the wake of our major supplies of vaccines and medicines to combat the coronavirus. We have formed a circle of countries on the continent that we traditionally maintain good and close relations with, and this circle is expanding, so we need to keep this process going.

Regarding European affairs, I have to state with regret that the opportunities for cooperation continue to narrow. Even though the EU remains our leading trade and economic partner, the previously rather productive Russia-EU cooperation is currently experiencing major difficulties.

The EU continues to push us back with its sanctions, unfriendly actions and unfounded accusations while ignoring the obvious benefits of interaction in politics, the economy and culture. We must not forget that we are neighbours and, as we know from history, dividing lines on the continent have never led to anything good. Of course, Russia is

interested in maintaining neighbourly and constructive ties with the European countries, but everything depends on our partners' willingness to establish and maintain equal and respectful cooperation.

A similar, if not more depressing, situation prevails in our relations with NATO which has adopted a markedly confrontational stance and is stubbornly and demonstratively bringing its military infrastructure closer to our borders, as I mentioned earlier. Moreover, NATO was the one that broke our dialogue mechanisms. Of course, we will provide a proper response to NATO's military activity along Russia's borders, but, most importantly, Brussels must understand that alleviating military-political tensions is not only in Russia's interest, but also in the interest of Europe and the world in general.

Out of the blue, they expelled our diplomats without providing any reason for doing so, and then they take offence at us closing their [diplomatic] mission in Russia. Why take offence? This was their initiative. They did it with their own hands and then started looking for someone to blame. Well, if they do not want to cooperate with us, okay, don't, it is not that we are desperate to cooperate with them. I think they will want to, they are already sending signals that they want to cooperate, but why did they expel our diplomats just like that, out of the blue, for no reason? Is it some kind of sport for them?

This also applies, by the way, to Russia-US relations, which, as you know, largely underlie global security and stability. At this point, these relations, to put it mildly, are in an unsatisfactory state. The diplomats from both countries are experiencing major problems. Embassy staffs have been cut and the embassies cannot function properly, let alone systematically engage in expanding bilateral ties. These are the consequences of the provocative policy pursued by US authorities, which began to practice large-scale bans and restrictions for Russian diplomats five years ago.

Our property in the United States has been seized in violation of every international standard and rule, every single rule. They have grossly violated the rules, just took our property and that was that – where is the Vienna Convention now? They even refuse to talk to us about it. Isn't this strange, in the seemingly civilised world we live in? Or it is not so civilised after all.

Nevertheless, the summit with President Biden in Geneva last June opened up a few opportunities for a dialogue and gradual alignment, straightening out our relations, and it is important that both sides consistently expand the agreements reached.

Indeed, something is already being done, this much must be admitted: joint work has begun on the strategic stability and information security agenda. True, our interests, assessments, and positions on many bilateral and international issues differ – this is indeed so and everyone is well aware of it – sometimes the difference is dramatic.

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However, I would like to say this again, we are open to contact and an exchange of views, to a constructive dialogue.

Colleagues,

The points that I made here show that the diplomatic service is definitely shouldering a heavy burden, which is constantly increasing. You have to work under very difficult and challenging conditions. The state will continue to heed any pressing problems with diplomatic service employees, and to strengthen their social guarantees.

We have made a few steps towards this in the past few years. Two basic laws have been adopted – on the diplomatic service and on the status of Russian ambassadors and permanent representatives in foreign states. A new remuneration system has been introduced, which increased the incomes of employees at the Foreign Ministry headquarters. The headquarters was slightly upsized, and the Foreign Ministry's proposals on expanding Russia's diplomatic and consular presence in a number of CIS countries have been approved, too. We will continue to keep all these matters under review, and to support useful initiatives from the top Ministry officials.

To conclude my remarks, I would like to thank all the employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs for their high-quality and dedicated work, and to wish them every success.

Taking this opportunity, I would like to again express my special gratitude to the diplomatic service veterans, who could not join us in this room today for obvious reasons, and I would ask you to convey to them my best wishes of good health and happiness.

Thank you for your attention.

Vladimir Putin

Address on the aggression of the Russian Federation against Ukraine

24.02.2022

Citizens of Russia, friends,

I consider it necessary today to speak again about the tragic events in Donbass and the key aspects of ensuring the security of Russia.

I will begin with what I said in my address on February 21, 2022. I spoke about our biggest concerns and worries, and about the fundamental threats which irresponsible Western politicians created for Russia consistently, rudely and unceremoniously from year to year. I am referring to the eastward expansion of NATO, which is moving its military infrastructure ever closer to the Russian border. It is a fact that over the past 30 years we have been patiently trying to come to an agreement with the leading NATO countries regarding the principles of equal and indivisible security in Europe. In response to our proposals, we invariably faced either cynical deception and lies or attempts at pressure and blackmail, while the North Atlantic alliance continued to expand despite our protests and concerns. Its military machine is moving and, as I said, is approaching our very border.

Why is this happening? Where did this insolent manner of talking down from the height of their exceptionalism, infallibility and all-permissiveness come from? What is the explanation for this contemptuous and disdainful attitude to our interests and absolutely legitimate demands?

The answer is simple. Everything is clear and obvious. In the late 1980s, the Soviet Union grew weaker and subsequently broke apart. That experience should serve as a good lesson for us, because it has shown us that the paralysis of power and will is the first step towards complete degradation and oblivion. We lost confidence for only one moment, but it was enough to disrupt the balance of forces in the world.

As a result, the old treaties and agreements are no longer effective. Entreaties and requests do not help. Anything that does not suit the dominant state, the powers that be, is denounced as archaic, obsolete and useless. At the same time, everything it regards as useful is presented as the ultimate truth and forced on others regardless of the cost, abusively and by any means available. Those who refuse to comply are subjected to strong-arm tactics.

What I am saying now does not concern only Russia, and Russia is not the only country that is worried about this. This has to do with the entire system of international relations, and sometimes even US allies. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to a redivision of the world, and the norms of international law that developed by that time – and the

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most important of them, the fundamental norms that were adopted following WWII and largely formalised its outcome – came in the way of those who declared themselves the winners of the Cold War.

Of course, practice, international relations and the rules regulating them had to take into account the changes that took place in the world and in the balance of forces. However, this should have been done professionally, smoothly, patiently, and with due regard and respect for the interests of all states and one's own responsibility. Instead, we saw a state of euphoria created by the feeling of absolute superiority, a kind of modern absolutism, coupled with the low cultural standards and arrogance of those who formulated and pushed through decisions that suited only themselves. The situation took a different turn.

There are many examples of this. First a bloody military operation was waged against Belgrade, without the UN Security Council's sanction but with combat aircraft and missiles used in the heart of Europe. The bombing of peaceful cities and vital infrastructure went on for several weeks. I have to recall these facts, because some Western colleagues prefer to forget them, and when we mentioned the event, they prefer to avoid speaking about international law, instead emphasising the circumstances which they interpret as they think necessary.

Then came the turn of Iraq, Libya and Syria. The illegal use of military power against Libya and the distortion of all the UN Security Council decisions on Libya ruined the state, created a huge seat of international terrorism, and pushed the country towards a humanitarian catastrophe, into the vortex of a civil war, which has continued there for years. The tragedy, which was created for hundreds of thousands and even millions of people not only in Libya but in the whole region, has led to a large-scale exodus from the Middle East and North Africa to Europe.

A similar fate was also prepared for Syria. The combat operations conducted by the Western coalition in that country without the Syrian government's approval or UN Security Council's sanction can only be defined as aggression and intervention.

But the example that stands apart from the above events is, of course, the invasion of Iraq without any legal grounds. They used the pretext of allegedly reliable information available in the United States about the presence of weapons of mass destruction in Iraq. To prove that allegation, the US Secretary of State held up a vial with white powder, publicly, for the whole world to see, assuring the international community that it was a chemical warfare agent created in Iraq. It later turned out that all of that was a fake and a sham, and that Iraq did not have any chemical weapons. Incredible and shocking but true. We witnessed lies made at the highest state level and voiced from the high UN

rostrum. As a result we see a tremendous loss in human life, damage, destruction, and a colossal upsurge of terrorism.

Overall, it appears that nearly everywhere, in many regions of the world where the United States brought its law and order, this created bloody, non-healing wounds and the curse of international terrorism and extremism. I have only mentioned the most glaring but far from only examples of disregard for international law.

This array includes promises not to expand NATO eastwards even by an inch. To reiterate: they have deceived us, or, to put it simply, they have played us. Sure, one often hears that politics is a dirty business. It could be, but it shouldn't be as dirty as it is now, not to such an extent. This type of con-artist behaviour is contrary not only to the principles of international relations but also and above all to the generally accepted norms of morality and ethics. Where is justice and truth here? Just lies and hypocrisy all around.

Incidentally, US politicians, political scientists and journalists write and say that a veritable "empire of lies" has been created inside the United States in recent years. It is hard to disagree with this – it is really so. But one should not be modest about it: the United States is still a great country and a system-forming power. All its satellites not only humbly and obediently say yes to and parrot it at the slightest pretext but also imitate its behaviour and enthusiastically accept the rules it is offering them. Therefore, one can say with good reason and confidence that the whole so-called Western bloc formed by the United States in its own image and likeness is, in its entirety, the very same "empire of lies."

As for our country, after the disintegration of the USSR, given the entire unprecedented openness of the new, modern Russia, its readiness to work honestly with the United States and other Western partners, and its practically unilateral disarmament, they immediately tried to put the final squeeze on us, finish us off, and utterly destroy us. This is how it was in the 1990s and the early 2000s, when the so-called collective West was actively supporting separatism and gangs of mercenaries in southern Russia. What victims, what losses we had to sustain and what trials we had to go through at that time before we broke the back of international terrorism in the Caucasus! We remember this and will never forget.

Properly speaking, the attempts to use us in their own interests never ceased until quite recently: they sought to destroy our traditional values and force on us their false values that would erode us, our people from within, the attitudes they have been aggressively imposing on their countries, attitudes that are directly leading to degradation and degeneration, because they are contrary to human nature. This is not going to happen. No one has ever succeeded in doing this, nor will they succeed now.

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Despite all that, in December 2021, we made yet another attempt to reach agreement with the United States and its allies on the principles of European security and NATO's non-expansion. Our efforts were in vain. The United States has not changed its position. It does not believe it necessary to agree with Russia on a matter that is critical for us. The United States is pursuing its own objectives, while neglecting our interests.

Of course, this situation begs a question: what next, what are we to expect? If history is any guide, we know that in 1940 and early 1941 the Soviet Union went to great lengths to prevent war or at least delay its outbreak. To this end, the USSR sought not to provoke the potential aggressor until the very end by refraining or postponing the most urgent and obvious preparations it had to make to defend itself from an imminent attack. When it finally acted, it was too late.

As a result, the country was not prepared to counter the invasion by Nazi Germany, which attacked our Motherland on June 22, 1941, without declaring war. The country stopped the enemy and went on to defeat it, but this came at a tremendous cost. The attempt to appease the aggressor ahead of the Great Patriotic War proved to be a mistake which came at a high cost for our people. In the first months after the hostilities broke out, we lost vast territories of strategic importance, as well as millions of lives. We will not make this mistake the second time. We have no right to do so.

Those who aspire to global dominance have publicly designated Russia as their enemy. They did so with impunity. Make no mistake, they had no reason to act this way. It is true that they have considerable financial, scientific, technological, and military capabilities. We are aware of this and have an objective view of the economic threats we have been hearing, just as our ability to counter this brash and never-ending blackmail. Let me reiterate that we have no illusions in this regard and are extremely realistic in our assessments.

As for military affairs, even after the dissolution of the USSR and losing a considerable part of its capabilities, today's Russia remains one of the most powerful nuclear states. Moreover, it has a certain advantage in several cutting-edge weapons. In this context, there should be no doubt for anyone that any potential aggressor will face defeat and ominous consequences should it directly attack our country.

At the same time, technology, including in the defence sector, is changing rapidly. One day there is one leader, and tomorrow another, but a military presence in territories bordering on Russia, if we permit it to go ahead, will stay for decades to come or maybe forever, creating an ever mounting and totally unacceptable threat for Russia.

Even now, with NATO's eastward expansion the situation for Russia has been becoming worse and more dangerous by the year. Moreover, these past days NATO leadership has been blunt in its statements that they need to accelerate and step up

efforts to bring the alliance's infrastructure closer to Russia's borders. In other words, they have been toughening their position. We cannot stay idle and passively observe these developments. This would be an absolutely irresponsible thing to do for us.

Any further expansion of the North Atlantic alliance's infrastructure or the ongoing efforts to gain a military foothold of the Ukrainian territory are unacceptable for us. Of course, the question is not about NATO itself. It merely serves as a tool of US foreign policy. The problem is that in territories adjacent to Russia, which I have to note is our historical land, a hostile "anti-Russia" is taking shape. Fully controlled from the outside, it is doing everything to attract NATO armed forces and obtain cutting-edge weapons.

For the United States and its allies, it is a policy of containing Russia, with obvious geopolitical dividends. For our country, it is a matter of life and death, a matter of our historical future as a nation. This is not an exaggeration; this is a fact. It is not only a very real threat to our interests but to the very existence of our state and to its sovereignty. It is the red line which we have spoken about on numerous occasions. They have crossed it.

This brings me to the situation in Donbass. We can see that the forces that staged the coup in Ukraine in 2014 have seized power, are keeping it with the help of ornamental election procedures and have abandoned the path of a peaceful conflict settlement. For eight years, for eight endless years we have been doing everything possible to settle the situation by peaceful political means. Everything was in vain.

As I said in my previous address, you cannot look without compassion at what is happening there. It became impossible to tolerate it. We had to stop that atrocity, that genocide of the millions of people who live there and who pinned their hopes on Russia, on all of us. It is their aspirations, the feelings and pain of these people that were the main motivating force behind our decision to recognise the independence of the Donbass people's republics.

I would like to additionally emphasise the following. Focused on their own goals, the leading NATO countries are supporting the far-right nationalists and neo-Nazis in Ukraine, those who will never forgive the people of Crimea and Sevastopol for freely making a choice to reunite with Russia.

They will undoubtedly try to bring war to Crimea just as they have done in Donbass, to kill innocent people just as members of the punitive units of Ukrainian nationalists and Hitler's accomplices did during the Great Patriotic War. They have also openly laid claim to several other Russian regions.

If we look at the sequence of events and the incoming reports, the showdown between Russia and these forces cannot be avoided. It is only a matter of time. They are getting ready and waiting for the right moment. Moreover, they went as far as aspire to acquire nuclear weapons. We will not let this happen.

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I have already said that Russia accepted the new geopolitical reality after the dissolution of the USSR. We have been treating all new post-Soviet states with respect and will continue to act this way. We respect and will respect their sovereignty, as proven by the assistance we provided to Kazakhstan when it faced tragic events and a challenge in terms of its statehood and integrity. However, Russia cannot feel safe, develop, and exist while facing a permanent threat from the territory of today's Ukraine.

Let me remind you that in 2000–2005 we used our military to push back against terrorists in the Caucasus and stood up for the integrity of our state. We preserved Russia. In 2014, we supported the people of Crimea and Sevastopol. In 2015, we used our Armed Forces to create a reliable shield that prevented terrorists from Syria from penetrating Russia. This was a matter of defending ourselves. We had no other choice.

The same is happening today. They did not leave us any other option for defending Russia and our people, other than the one we are forced to use today. In these circumstances, we have to take bold and immediate action. The people's republics of Donbass have asked Russia for help.

In this context, in accordance with Article 51 (Chapter VII) of the UN Charter, with permission of Russia's Federation Council, and in execution of the treaties of friendship and mutual assistance with the Donetsk People's Republic and the Lugansk People's Republic, ratified by the Federal Assembly on February 22, I made a decision to carry out a special military operation.

The purpose of this operation is to protect people who, for eight years now, have been facing humiliation and genocide perpetrated by the Kiev regime. To this end, we will seek to demilitarise and denazify Ukraine, as well as bring to trial those who perpetrated numerous bloody crimes against civilians, including against citizens of the Russian Federation.

It is not our plan to occupy the Ukrainian territory. We do not intend to impose anything on anyone by force. At the same time, we have been hearing an increasing number of statements coming from the West that there is no need any more to abide by the documents setting forth the outcomes of World War II, as signed by the totalitarian Soviet regime. How can we respond to that?

The outcomes of World War II and the sacrifices our people had to make to defeat Nazism are sacred. This does not contradict the high values of human rights and freedoms in the reality that emerged over the post-war decades. This does not mean that nations cannot enjoy the right to self-determination, which is enshrined in Article 1 of the UN Charter.

Let me remind you that the people living in territories which are part of today's Ukraine were not asked how they want to build their lives when the USSR was created

or after World War II. Freedom guides our policy, the freedom to choose independently our future and the future of our children. We believe that all the peoples living in today's Ukraine, anyone who want to do this, must be able to enjoy this right to make a free choice.

In this context I would like to address the citizens of Ukraine. In 2014, Russia was obliged to protect the people of Crimea and Sevastopol from those who you yourself call "nats." The people of Crimea and Sevastopol made their choice in favour of being with their historical homeland, Russia, and we supported their choice. As I said, we could not act otherwise.

The current events have nothing to do with a desire to infringe on the interests of Ukraine and the Ukrainian people. They are connected with the defending Russia from those who have taken Ukraine hostage and are trying to use it against our country and our people.

I reiterate: we are acting to defend ourselves from the threats created for us and from a worse peril than what is happening now. I am asking you, however hard this may be, to understand this and to work together with us so as to turn this tragic page as soon as possible and to move forward together, without allowing anyone to interfere in our affairs and our relations but developing them independently, so as to create favourable conditions for overcoming all these problems and to strengthen us from within as a single whole, despite the existence of state borders. I believe in this, in our common future.

I would also like to address the military personnel of the Ukrainian Armed Forces.

Comrade officers,

Your fathers, grandfathers and great-grandfathers did not fight the Nazi occupiers and did not defend our common Motherland to allow today's neo-Nazis to seize power in Ukraine. You swore the oath of allegiance to the Ukrainian people and not to the junta, the people's adversary which is plundering Ukraine and humiliating the Ukrainian people.

I urge you to refuse to carry out their criminal orders. I urge you to immediately lay down arms and go home. I will explain what this means: the military personnel of the Ukrainian army who do this will be able to freely leave the zone of hostilities and return to their families. I want to emphasise again that all responsibility for the possible bloodshed will lie fully and wholly with the ruling Ukrainian regime.

I would now like to say something very important for those who may be tempted to interfere in these developments from the outside. No matter who tries to stand in our way or all the more so create threats for our country and our people, they must know that Russia will respond immediately, and the consequences will be such as you have

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never seen in your entire history. No matter how the events unfold, we are ready. All the necessary decisions in this regard have been taken. I hope that my words will be heard.

Citizens of Russia,

The culture and values, experience and traditions of our ancestors invariably provided a powerful underpinning for the wellbeing and the very existence of entire states and nations, their success and viability. Of course, this directly depends on the ability to quickly adapt to constant change, maintain social cohesion, and readiness to consolidate and summon all the available forces in order to move forward.

We always need to be strong, but this strength can take on different forms. The “empire of lies,” which I mentioned in the beginning of my speech, proceeds in its policy primarily from rough, direct force. This is when our saying on being “all brawn and no brains” applies.

We all know that having justice and truth on our side is what makes us truly strong. If this is the case, it would be hard to disagree with the fact that it is our strength and our readiness to fight that are the bedrock of independence and sovereignty and provide the necessary foundation for building a reliable future for your home, your family, and your Motherland.

Dear compatriots,

I am certain that devoted soldiers and officers of Russia’s Armed Forces will perform their duty with professionalism and courage. I have no doubt that the government institutions at all levels and specialists will work effectively to guarantee the stability of our economy, financial system and social wellbeing, and the same applies to corporate executives and the entire business community. I hope that all parliamentary parties and civil society take a consolidated, patriotic position.

At the end of the day, the future of Russia is in the hands of its multi-ethnic people, as has always been the case in our history. This means that the decisions that I made will be executed, that we will achieve the goals we have set, and reliably guarantee the security of our Motherland.

I believe in your support and the invincible force rooted in the love for our Fatherland.

Vladimir Putin

Address on the illegal annexation of the so called “Donetsk People’s Republic”,
“Lugansk People’s Republic”, “Zaporozhye Region” and “Kherson Region”

30.09.2022

Citizens of Russia, citizens of the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics, residents of the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, deputies of the State Duma, senators of the Russian Federation,

As you know, referendums have been held in the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics and the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions. The ballots have been counted and the results have been announced. The people have made their unequivocal choice.

Today we will sign treaties on the accession of the Donetsk People’s Republic, Lugansk People’s Republic, Zaporozhye Region and Kherson Region to the Russian Federation. I have no doubt that the Federal Assembly will support the constitutional laws on the accession to Russia and the establishment of four new regions, our new constituent entities of the Russian Federation, because this is the will of millions of people. It is undoubtedly their right, an inherent right sealed in Article 1 of the UN Charter, which directly states the principle of equal rights and self-determination of peoples. I repeat, it is an inherent right of the people. It is based on our historical affinity, and it is that right that led generations of our predecessors, those who built and defended Russia for centuries since the period of Ancient Rus, to victory. Here in Novorossiya, [Pyotr] Rummyantsev, [Alexander] Suvorov and [Fyodor] Ushakov fought their battles, and Catherine the Great and [Grigory] Potyomkin founded new cities. Our grandfathers and great-grandfathers fought here to the bitter end during the Great Patriotic War.

We will always remember the heroes of the Russian Spring, those who refused to accept the neo-Nazi coup d’état in Ukraine in 2014, all those who died for the right to speak their native language, to preserve their culture, traditions and religion, and for the very right to live. We remember the soldiers of Donbass, the martyrs of the “Odessa Khatyn,” the victims of inhuman terrorist attacks carried out by the Kiev regime. We commemorate volunteers and militiamen, civilians, children, women, senior citizens, Russians, Ukrainians, people of various nationalities; popular leader of Donetsk Alexander Zakharchenko; military commanders Arsen Pavlov and Vladimir Zhoga, Olga Kachura and Alexei Mozgovoy; prosecutor of the Lugansk Republic Sergei Gorenko; paratrooper Nurmagomed Gadzhimagomedov and all our soldiers and officers who died a hero’s death during the special military operation. They are heroes. Heroes of great Russia. Please join me in a minute of silence to honour their memory.

Thank you.

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Behind the choice of millions of residents in the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics, in the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions, is our common destiny and thousand-year history. People have passed this spiritual connection on to their children and grandchildren. Despite all the trials they endured, they carried the love for Russia through the years. This is something no one can destroy. That is why both older generations and young people – those who were born after the tragic collapse of the Soviet Union – have voted for our unity, for our common future.

In 1991 in Belovezhskaya Pushcha, representatives of the party elite of that time made a decision to terminate the Soviet Union, without asking ordinary citizens what they wanted, and people suddenly found themselves cut off from their homeland. This tore apart and dismembered our national community and triggered a national catastrophe. Just like the government quietly demarcated the borders of Soviet republics, acting behind the scenes after the 1917 revolution, the last leaders of the Soviet Union, contrary to the direct expression of the will of the majority of people in the referendum of 1991, destroyed our great country, and simply made the people in the former republics face this as an accomplished fact.

I can admit that they didn't even know what they were doing and what consequences their actions would have in the end. But it doesn't matter now. There is no Soviet Union anymore; we cannot return to the past. Actually, Russia no longer needs it today; this isn't our ambition. But there is nothing stronger than the determination of millions of people who, by their culture, religion, traditions, and language, consider themselves part of Russia, whose ancestors lived in a single country for centuries. There is nothing stronger than their determination to return to their true historical homeland.

For eight long years, people in Donbass were subjected to genocide, shelling and blockades; in Kherson and Zaporozhye, a criminal policy was pursued to cultivate hatred for Russia, for everything Russian. Now too, during the referendums, the Kiev regime threatened schoolteachers, women who worked in election commissions with reprisals and death. Kiev threatened millions of people who came to express their will with repression. But the people of Donbass, Zaporozhye and Kherson weren't broken, and they had their say.

I want the Kiev authorities and their true handlers in the West to hear me now, and I want everyone to remember this: the people living in Lugansk and Donetsk, in Kherson and Zaporozhye have become our citizens, forever.

We call on the Kiev regime to immediately cease fire and all hostilities; to end the war it unleashed back in 2014 and return to the negotiating table. We are ready for this, as we have said more than once. But the choice of the people in Donetsk, Lugansk, Zaporozhye and Kherson will not be discussed. The decision has been made, and Russia will not

betray it. Kiev's current authorities should respect this free expression of the people's will; there is no other way. This is the only way to peace.

We will defend our land with all the forces and resources we have, and we will do everything we can to ensure the safety of our people. This is the great liberating mission of our nation.

We will definitely rebuild the destroyed cities and towns, the residential buildings, schools, hospitals, theatres and museums. We will restore and develop industrial enterprises, factories, infrastructure, as well as the social security, pension, healthcare and education systems.

We will certainly work to improve the level of security. Together we will make sure that citizens in the new regions can feel the support of all the people of Russia, of the entire nation, all the republics, territories and regions of our vast Motherland.

Friends, colleagues,

Today I would like to address our soldiers and officers who are taking part in the special military operation, the fighters of Donbass and Novorossiia, those who went to military recruitment offices after receiving a call-up paper under the executive order on partial mobilisation, and those who did this voluntarily, answering the call of their hearts. I would like to address their parents, wives and children, to tell them what our people are fighting for, what kind of enemy we are up against, and who is pushing the world into new wars and crises and deriving blood-stained benefits from this tragedy.

Our compatriots, our brothers and sisters in Ukraine who are part of our united people have seen with their own eyes what the ruling class of the so-called West have prepared for humanity as a whole. They have dropped their masks and shown what they are really made of.

When the Soviet Union collapsed, the West decided that the world and all of us would permanently accede to its dictates. In 1991, the West thought that Russia would never rise after such shocks and would fall to pieces on its own. This almost happened. We remember the horrible 1990s, hungry, cold and hopeless. But Russia remained standing, came alive, grew stronger and occupied its rightful place in the world.

Meanwhile, the West continued and continues looking for another chance to strike a blow at us, to weaken and break up Russia, which they have always dreamed about, to divide our state and set our peoples against each other, and to condemn them to poverty and extinction. They cannot rest easy knowing that there is such a great country with this huge territory in the world, with its natural wealth, resources and people who cannot and will not do someone else's bidding.

The West is ready to cross every line to preserve the neo-colonial system which allows it to live off the world, to plunder it thanks to the domination of the dollar and technology,

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to collect an actual tribute from humanity, to extract its primary source of unearned prosperity, the rent paid to the hegemon. The preservation of this annuity is their main, real and absolutely self-serving motivation. This is why total de-sovereignisation is in their interest. This explains their aggression towards independent states, traditional values and authentic cultures, their attempts to undermine international and integration processes, new global currencies and technological development centres they cannot control. It is critically important for them to force all countries to surrender their sovereignty to the United States.

In certain countries, the ruling elites voluntarily agree to do this, voluntarily agree to become vassals; others are bribed or intimidated. And if this does not work, they destroy entire states, leaving behind humanitarian disasters, devastation, ruins, millions of wrecked and mangled human lives, terrorist enclaves, social disaster zones, protectorates, colonies and semi-colonies. They don't care. All they care about is their own benefit.

I want to underscore again that their insatiability and determination to preserve their unfettered dominance are the real causes of the hybrid war that the collective West is waging against Russia. They do not want us to be free; they want us to be a colony. They do not want equal cooperation; they want to loot. They do not want to see us a free society, but a mass of soulless slaves.

They see our thought and our philosophy as a direct threat. That is why they target our philosophers for assassination. Our culture and art present a danger to them, so they are trying to ban them. Our development and prosperity are also a threat to them because competition is growing. They do not want or need Russia, but we do.

I would like to remind you that in the past, ambitions of world domination have repeatedly shattered against the courage and resilience of our people. Russia will always be Russia. We will continue to defend our values and our Motherland.

The West is counting on impunity, on being able to get away with anything. As a matter of fact, this was actually the case until recently. Strategic security agreements have been trashed; agreements reached at the highest political level have been declared tall tales; firm promises not to expand NATO to the east gave way to dirty deception as soon as our former leaders bought into them; missile defence, intermediate-range and shorter-range missile treaties have been unilaterally dismantled under far-fetched pretexts.

And all we hear is, the West is insisting on a rules-based order. Where did that come from anyway? Who has ever seen these rules? Who agreed or approved them? Listen, this is just a lot of nonsense, utter deceit, double standards, or even triple standards! They must think we're stupid.

Russia is a great thousand-year-old power, a whole civilisation, and it is not going to live by such makeshift, false rules.

It was the so-called West that trampled on the principle of the inviolability of borders, and now it is deciding, at its own discretion, who has the right to self-determination and who does not, who is unworthy of it. It is unclear what their decisions are based on or who gave them the right to decide in the first place. They just assumed it.

That is why the choice of the people in Crimea, Sevastopol, Donetsk, Lugansk, Zaporozhye and Kherson makes them so furiously angry. The West does not have any moral right to weigh in, or even utter a word about freedom of democracy. It does not and it never did.

Western elites not only deny national sovereignty and international law. Their hegemony has pronounced features of totalitarianism, despotism and apartheid. They brazenly divide the world into their vassals – the so-called civilised countries – and all the rest, who, according to the designs of today’s Western racists, should be added to the list of barbarians and savages. False labels like “rogue country” or “authoritarian regime” are already available, and are used to stigmatise entire nations and states, which is nothing new. There is nothing new in this: deep down, the Western elites have remained the same colonisers. They discriminate and divide peoples into the top tier and the rest.

We have never agreed to and will never agree to such political nationalism and racism. What else, if not racism, is the Russophobia being spread around the world? What, if not racism, is the West’s dogmatic conviction that its civilisation and neoliberal culture is an indisputable model for the entire world to follow? “You’re either with us or against us.” It even sounds strange.

Western elites are even shifting repentance for their own historical crimes on everyone else, demanding that the citizens of their countries and other peoples confess to things they have nothing to do with at all, for example, the period of colonial conquests.

It is worth reminding the West that it began its colonial policy back in the Middle Ages, followed by the worldwide slave trade, the genocide of Indian tribes in America, the plunder of India and Africa, the wars of England and France against China, as a result of which it was forced to open its ports to the opium trade. What they did was get entire nations hooked on drugs and purposefully exterminated entire ethnic groups for the sake of grabbing land and resources, hunting people like animals. This is contrary to human nature, truth, freedom and justice.

While we – we are proud that in the 20th century our country led the anti-colonial movement, which opened up opportunities for many peoples around the world to make progress, reduce poverty and inequality, and defeat hunger and disease.

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To emphasise, one of the reasons for the centuries-old Russophobia, the Western elites' unconcealed animosity toward Russia is precisely the fact that we did not allow them to rob us during the period of colonial conquests and forced the Europeans to trade with us on mutually beneficial terms. This was achieved by creating a strong centralised state in Russia, which grew and got stronger based on the great moral values of Orthodox Christianity, Islam, Judaism and Buddhism, as well as Russian culture and the Russian word that were open to all.

There were numerous plans to invade Russia. Such attempts were made during the Time of Troubles in the 17th century and in the period of ordeals after the 1917 revolution. All of them failed. The West managed to grab hold of Russia's wealth only in the late 20th century, when the state had been destroyed. They called us friends and partners, but they treated us like a colony, using various schemes to pump trillions of dollars out of the country. We remember. We have not forgotten anything.

A few days ago, people in Donetsk and Lugansk, Kherson and Zaporozhye declared their support for restoring our historical unity. Thank you!

Western countries have been saying for centuries that they bring freedom and democracy to other nations. Nothing could be further from the truth. Instead of bringing democracy they suppressed and exploited, and instead of giving freedom they enslaved and oppressed. The unipolar world is inherently anti-democratic and unfree; it is false and hypocritical through and through.

The United States is the only country in the world that has used nuclear weapons twice, destroying the cities of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in Japan. And they created a precedent.

Recall that during WWII the United States and Britain reduced Dresden, Hamburg, Cologne and many other German cities to rubble, without the least military necessity. It was done ostentatiously and, to repeat, without any military necessity. They had only one goal, as with the nuclear bombing of Japanese cities: to intimidate our country and the rest of the world.

The United States left a deep scar in the memory of the people of Korea and Vietnam with their carpet bombings and use of napalm and chemical weapons.

It actually continues to occupy Germany, Japan, the Republic of Korea and other countries, which they cynically refer to as equals and allies. Look now, what kind of alliance is that? The whole world knows that the top officials in these countries are being spied on and that their offices and homes are bugged. It is a disgrace, a disgrace for those who do this and for those who, like slaves, silently and meekly swallow this arrogant behaviour.

They call the orders and threats they make to their vassals Euro-Atlantic solidarity, and the creation of biological weapons and the use of human test subjects, including in Ukraine, noble medical research.

It is their destructive policies, wars and plunder that have unleashed today's massive wave of migrants. Millions of people endure hardships and humiliation or die by the thousands trying to reach Europe.

They are exporting grain from Ukraine now. Where are they taking it under the guise of ensuring the food security of the poorest countries? Where is it going? They are taking it to the self-same European countries. Only five percent has been delivered to the poorest countries. More cheating and naked deception again.

In effect, the American elite is using the tragedy of these people to weaken its rivals, to destroy nation states. This goes for Europe and for the identities of France, Italy, Spain and other countries with centuries-long histories.

Washington demands more and more sanctions against Russia and the majority of European politicians obediently go along with it. They clearly understand that by pressuring the EU to completely give up Russian energy and other resources, the United States is practically pushing Europe toward deindustrialisation in a bid to get its hands on the entire European market. These European elites understand everything – they do, but they prefer to serve the interests of others. This is no longer servility but direct betrayal of their own peoples. God bless, it is up to them.

But the Anglo-Saxons believe sanctions are no longer enough and now they have turned to subversion. It seems incredible but it is a fact – by causing explosions on Nord Stream's international gas pipelines passing along the bottom of the Baltic Sea, they have actually embarked on the destruction of Europe's entire energy infrastructure. It is clear to everyone who stands to gain. Those who benefit are responsible, of course.

The dictates of the US are backed up by crude force, on the law of the fist. Sometimes it is beautifully wrapped sometimes there is no wrapping at all but the gist is the same – the law of the fist. Hence, the deployment and maintenance of hundreds of military bases in all corners of the world, NATO expansion, and attempts to cobble together new military alliances, such as AUKUS and the like. Much is being done to create a Washington-Seoul-Tokyo military-political chain. All states that possess or aspire to genuine strategic sovereignty and are capable of challenging Western hegemony, are automatically declared enemies.

These are the principles that underlie US and NATO military doctrines that require total domination. Western elites are presenting their neocolonialist plans with the same hypocrisy, claiming peaceful intentions, talking about some kind of deterrence. This

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evasive word migrates from one strategy to another but really only means one thing – undermining any and all sovereign centres of power.

We have already heard about the deterrence of Russia, China and Iran. I believe next in line are other countries of Asia, Latin America, Africa and the Middle East, as well as current US partners and allies. After all, we know that when they are displeased, they introduce sanctions against their allies as well – against this or that bank or company. This is their practice and they will expand it. They have everything in their sights, including our next-door neighbours – the CIS countries.

At the same time, the West has clearly been engaged in wishful thinking for a long time. In launching the sanctions blitzkrieg against Russia, for example, they thought that they could once again line up the whole world at their command. As it turns out, however, such a bright prospect does not excite everyone – other than complete political masochists and admirers of other unconventional forms of international relations. Most states refuse to “snap a salute” and instead choose the sensible path of cooperation with Russia.

The West clearly did not expect such insubordination. They simply got used to acting according to a template, to grab whatever they please, by blackmail, bribery, intimidation, and convinced themselves that these methods would work forever, as if they had fossilised in the past.

Such self-confidence is a direct product not only of the notorious concept of exceptionalism – although it never ceases to amaze – but also of the real “information hunger” in the West. The truth has been drowned in an ocean of myths, illusions and fakes, using extremely aggressive propaganda, lying like Goebbels. The more unbelievable the lie, the quicker people will believe it – that is how they operate, according to this principle.

But people cannot be fed with printed dollars and euros. You can’t feed them with those pieces of paper, and the virtual, inflated capitalisation of western social media companies can’t heat their homes. Everything I am saying is important. And what I just said is no less so: you can’t feed anyone with paper – you need food; and you can’t heat anyone’s home with these inflated capitalisations – you need energy.

That is why politicians in Europe have to convince their fellow citizens to eat less, take a shower less often and dress warmer at home. And those who start asking fair questions like “Why is that, in fact?” are immediately declared enemies, extremists and radicals. They point back at Russia and say: that is the source of all your troubles. More lies.

I want to make special note of the fact that there is every reason to believe that the Western elites are not going to look for constructive ways out of the global food and

energy crisis that they and they alone are to blame for, as a result of their long-term policy, dating back long before our special military operation in Ukraine, in Donbass. They have no intention of solving the problems of injustice and inequality. I am afraid they would rather use other formulas they are more comfortable with.

And here it is important to recall that the West bailed itself out of its early 20th century challenges with World War I. Profits from World War II helped the United States finally overcome the Great Depression and become the largest economy in the world, and to impose on the planet the power of the dollar as a global reserve currency. And the 1980s crisis – things came to a head in the 1980s again – the West emerged from it unscathed largely by appropriating the inheritance and resources of the collapsed and defunct Soviet Union. That's a fact.

Now, in order to free itself from the latest web of challenges, they need to dismantle Russia as well as other states that choose a sovereign path of development, at all costs, to be able to further plunder other nations' wealth and use it to patch their own holes. If this does not happen, I cannot rule out that they will try to trigger a collapse of the entire system, and blame everything on that, or, God forbid, decide to use the old formula of economic growth through war.

Russia is aware of its responsibility to the international community and will make every effort to ensure that cooler heads prevail.

The current neocolonial model is ultimately doomed; this much is obvious. But I repeat that its real masters will cling to it to the end. They simply have nothing to offer the world except to maintain the same system of plundering and racketeering.

They do not give a damn about the natural right of billions of people, the majority of humanity, to freedom and justice, the right to determine their own future. They have already moved on to the radical denial of moral, religious, and family values.

Let's answer some very simple questions for ourselves. Now I would like to return to what I said and want to address also all citizens of the country – not just the colleagues that are in the hall – but all citizens of Russia: do we want to have here, in our country, in Russia, “parent number one, parent number two and parent number three” (they have completely lost it!) instead of mother and father? Do we want our schools to impose on our children, from their earliest days in school, perversions that lead to degradation and extinction? Do we want to drum into their heads the ideas that certain other genders exist along with women and men and to offer them gender reassignment surgery? Is that what we want for our country and our children? This is all unacceptable to us. We have a different future of our own.

Let me repeat that the dictatorship of the Western elites targets all societies, including the citizens of Western countries themselves. This is a challenge to all. This

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complete renunciation of what it means to be human, the overthrow of faith and traditional values, and the suppression of freedom are coming to resemble a “religion in reverse” – pure Satanism. Exposing false messiahs, Jesus Christ said in the Sermon on the Mount: “By their fruits ye shall know them.” These poisonous fruits are already obvious to people, and not only in our country but also in all countries, including many people in the West itself.

The world has entered a period of a fundamental, revolutionary transformation. New centres of power are emerging. They represent the majority – the majority! – of the international community. They are ready not only to declare their interests but also to protect them. They see in multipolarity an opportunity to strengthen their sovereignty, which means gaining genuine freedom, historical prospects, and the right to their own independent, creative and distinctive forms of development, to a harmonious process.

As I have already said, we have many like-minded people in Europe and the United States, and we feel and see their support. An essentially emancipatory, anti-colonial movement against unipolar hegemony is taking shape in the most diverse countries and societies. Its power will only grow with time. It is this force that will determine our future geopolitical reality.

Friends,

Today, we are fighting for a just and free path, first of all for ourselves, for Russia, in order to leave dictators and despotism in the past. I am convinced that countries and peoples understand that a policy based on the exceptionalism of whoever it may be and the suppression of other cultures and peoples is inherently criminal, and that we must close this shameful chapter. The ongoing collapse of Western hegemony is irreversible. And I repeat: things will never be the same.

The battlefield to which destiny and history have called us is a battlefield for our people, for the great historical Russia. For the great historical Russia, for future generations, our children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren. We must protect them against enslavement and monstrous experiments that are designed to cripple their minds and souls.

Today, we are fighting so that it would never occur to anyone that Russia, our people, our language, or our culture can be erased from history. Today, we need a consolidated society, and this consolidation can only be based on sovereignty, freedom, creation, and justice. Our values are humanity, mercy and compassion.

And I want to close with the words of a true patriot Ivan Ilyin: “If I consider Russia my Motherland, that means that I love as a Russian, contemplate and think, sing and speak

as a Russian; that I believe in the spiritual strength of the Russian people. Its spirit is my spirit; its destiny is my destiny; its suffering is my grief; and its prosperity is my joy.”

Behind these words stands a glorious spiritual choice, which, for more than a thousand years of Russian statehood, was followed by many generations of our ancestors. Today, we are making this choice; the citizens of the Donetsk and Lugansk people’s republics and the residents of the Zaporozhye and Kherson regions have made this choice. They made the choice to be with their people, to be with their Motherland, to share in its destiny, and to be victorious together with it.

The truth is with us, and behind us is Russia!

Vladimir Putin

Speech at Valdai International Discussion Club meeting

05.10.2023

Participants in the plenary session, colleagues, ladies and gentlemen,

I am glad to welcome you all in Sochi at the anniversary meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club. The moderator has already mentioned that this is the 20th annual meeting.

In keeping with its traditions, our, or should I say your forum, has brought together political leaders and researchers, experts and civil society activists from many countries around the world, once again reaffirming its high status as a relevant intellectual platform. The Valdai discussions invariably reflect the most important global political processes in the 21st century in their entirety and complexity. I am certain that this will also be the case today, as it probably was in the preceding days when you debated with each other. It will also stay this way moving forward because our objective is basically to build a new world. And it is at these decisive stages that you, my colleagues, have an extremely important role to play and bear special responsibility as intellectuals.

Over the years of the club's work, both Russia and the world have seen drastic, and even dramatic, colossal changes. Twenty years is not a long period by historical standards, but during eras when the entire world order is crumbling, time seems to shrink.

I think you will agree that more events have taken place in the past 20 years than over decades in some historical periods before, and it was major changes that dictated the fundamental transformation of the very principles of international relations.

In the early 21st century, everybody hoped that states and peoples had learned the lessons of the expensive and destructive military and ideological confrontations of the previous century, saw their harmfulness and the fragility and interconnectedness of our planet, and understood that the global problems of humanity call for joint action and the search for collective solutions, while egotism, arrogance and disregard for real challenges would inevitably lead to a dead-end, just like the attempts by more powerful countries to force their opinions and interests onto everyone else. This should have become obvious to everyone. It should have, but it has not. It has not.

When we met for the first time at the club's meeting nearly 20 years ago, our country was entering a new stage in its development. Russia was emerging from an extremely difficult period of convalescence after the Soviet Union's dissolution. We launched the process of building a new and what we saw as a more just world order energetically and with good will. It is a boon that our country can make a huge contribution because we have things to offer to our friends, partners and the world as a whole.

Regrettably, our interest in constructive interaction was misunderstood, was seen as obedience, as an agreement that the new world order would be created by those who declared themselves the winners in the Cold War. It was seen as an admission that Russia was ready to follow in others' wake and not to be guided by our own national interests but by somebody else's interests.

Over these years, we warned more than once that this approach would not only lead to a dead-end but that it was fraught with the increasing threat of a military conflict. But nobody listened to us or wanted to listen to us. The arrogance of our so-called partners in the West went through the roof. This is the only way I can put it.

The United States and its satellites have taken a steady course towards hegemony in military affairs, politics, the economy, culture and even morals and values. Since the very beginning, it has been clear to us that attempts to establish a monopoly were doomed to fail. The world is too complicated and diverse to be subjected to one system, even if it is backed by the enormous power of the West accumulated over centuries of its colonial policy. Your colleagues as well – many of them are absent today, but they do not deny that to a significant degree, the prosperity of the West has been achieved by robbing colonies for several centuries. This is a fact. Essentially, this level of development has been achieved by robbing the entire planet.

The history of the West is essentially the chronicle of endless expansion. Western influence in the world is an immense military and financial pyramid scheme that constantly needs more “fuel” to support itself, with natural, technological and human resources that belong to others. This is why the West simply cannot and is not going to stop. Our arguments, reasoning, calls for common sense or proposals have simply been ignored.

I have said this publicly to both our allies and partners. There was a moment when I simply suggested: perhaps we should also join NATO? But no, NATO does not need a country like ours. No. I want to know, what else do they need? We thought we became part of the crowd, got a foot in the door. What else were we supposed to do? There was no more ideological confrontation. What was the problem? I guess the problem was their geopolitical interests and arrogance towards others. Their self-aggrandisement was and is the problem.

We are compelled to respond to ever-increasing military and political pressure. I have said many times that it was not us who started the so-called “war in Ukraine.” On the contrary, we are trying to end it. It was not us who orchestrated a coup in Kiev in 2014 – a bloody and anti-constitutional coup. When [similar events] happen in other places, we immediately hear all the international media – mainly those subordinate to the Anglo-Saxon world, of course – this is unacceptable, this is impossible, this is anti-democratic.

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But the coup in Kiev was acceptable. They even cited the amount of money spent on this coup. Anything was suddenly acceptable.

At that time, Russia tried its best to support the people of Crimea and Sevastopol. We did not try to overthrow the government or intimidate the people in Crimea and Sevastopol, threatening them with ethnic cleansing in the Nazi spirit. It was not us who tried to force Donbass to obey by shelling and bombing. We did not threaten to kill anyone who wanted to speak their native language. Look, everyone here is an informed and educated person. It might be possible – excuse my ‘mauvais ton’ – to brainwash millions of people who perceive reality through the media. But you must know what was really going on: they have been bombing the place for nine years, shooting and using tanks. That was a war, a real war unleashed against Donbass. And no one counted the dead children in Donbass. No one cried for the dead in other countries, especially in the West.

This war, the one that the regime sitting in Kiev started with the vigorous and direct support from the West, has been going on for more than nine years, and Russia’s special military operation is aimed at stopping it. And it reminds us that unilateral steps, no matter who takes them, will inevitably prompt retaliation. As we know, every action has an equal opposite reaction. That is what any responsible state, every sovereign, independent and self-respecting country does.

Everyone realises that in an international system where arbitrariness reigns, where all decision-making is up to those who think they are exceptional, sinless and right, any country can be attacked simply because it is disliked by a hegemon, who has lost any sense of proportion – and I would add, any sense of reality.

Unfortunately, we have to admit that our counterparties in the West have lost their sense of reality and have crossed every line. They really should not have done this.

The Ukraine crisis is not a territorial conflict, and I want to make that clear. Russia is the world’s largest country in terms of land area, and we have no interest in conquering additional territory. We still have much to do to properly develop Siberia, Eastern Siberia, and the Russian Far East. This is not a territorial conflict and not an attempt to establish regional geopolitical balance. The issue is much broader and more fundamental and is about the principles underlying the new international order.

Lasting peace will only be possible when everyone feels safe and secure, understands that their opinions are respected, and that there is a balance in the world where no one can unilaterally force or compel others to live or behave as a hegemon pleases even when it contradicts the sovereignty, genuine interests, traditions, or customs of peoples and countries. In such an arrangement, the very concept of sovereignty is simply denied and, sorry, is thrown in the garbage.

Clearly, commitment to bloc-based approaches and the push to drive the world into a situation of ongoing “us versus them” confrontation is a bad legacy of the 20th century. It is a product of Western political culture, at least of its most aggressive manifestations. To reiterate, the West – at least a certain part of the West, the elite – always need an enemy. They need an enemy to justify the need for military action and expansion. But they also need an enemy to maintain internal control within a certain system of this very hegemon and within blocs like NATO or other military-political blocs. There must be an enemy so everyone can rally around the “leader.”

The way other states run their lives is none of our business. However, we see how the ruling elite in many of them are forcing societies to accept norms and rules that the people – or at least a significant number of people and even the majority in some countries – are unwilling to embrace. But they are still urged to do so, with the authorities continually inventing justifications for their actions, attributing growing internal problems to external causes, and fabricating or exaggerating non-existent threats.

Russia is a favourite subject for these politickers. We have grown used to this over the course of history, of course. But they try to portray those who are not willing to blindly follow these Western elite groups as enemies. They have used this approach with various countries, including the People’s Republic of China, and they tried to do this to India in certain situations. They are flirting with it now, as we can see very clearly. We are aware of and see the scenarios they are using in Asia. I would like to say that the Indian leadership is independent and strongly nationally oriented. I think these attempts are pointless, yet they continue with them. They try to portray the Arab world as an enemy; they do it selectively and try to act accurately, but this is what it comes down to. They even try to present Muslims as a hostile environment, and so on and so forth. In fact, anyone who acts independently and in its own interests is immediately seen by the Western elite as a hindrance that must be removed.

Artificial geopolitical associations are being forced onto the world, and restricted-access blocs are being created. We see this happening in Europe, where an aggressive policy of NATO expansion has been pursued for decades, in the Asia-Pacific region and in South Asia, where they are trying to destroy an open and inclusive cooperation architecture. A bloc-based approach, if we call a spade a spade, limits individual states’ rights and restricts their freedom to develop along their own path, attempting to drive them into a “cage” of obligations. In a way, this obviously amounts to the dispossession of part of their sovereignty, often followed by the enforcement of their own solutions not only in the area of security but also in other areas, primarily the economy, which is happening now in relations between the United States and Europe. There is no need to

explain this now. If necessary, we can talk about it in detail during the discussion after my opening remarks.

To attain these goals, they try to replace international law with a “rules-based order,” whatever that means. It is not clear what rules these are and who invented them. It is just rubbish, but they are trying to plant this idea in the minds of millions of people. “You must live according to the rules.” What rules?

And actually, if I may, our Western “colleagues,” especially those from the United States, don’t just arbitrarily set these rules, they teach others how to follow them, and how others should behave overall. All of this is done and expressed in a blatantly ill-mannered and pushy way. This is another manifestation of colonial mentality. All the time we hear, “you must,” “you are obligated,” “we are seriously warning you.”

Who are you to do that? What right do you have to warn others? This is just amazing. Maybe those who say all this should get rid of their arrogance and stop behaving in such a way towards the global community that perfectly knows its objectives and interests, and should drop this colonial-era thinking? I want to tell them sometimes: wake up, this era has long gone and will never return.

I will say more: for centuries, such behavior led to the replication of one thing – big wars, with various ideological and quasi-moral justifications invented to justify these wars. Today this is especially dangerous. As you know, humankind has the means to easily destroy the whole planet, and ongoing mind manipulation, unbelievable in terms of scale, leads to losing a sense of reality. Clearly, a way out should be sought from this vicious circle. As I understand it, friends and colleagues, this is why you come here to address these vital issues at the Valdai Club venue.

In Russia’s Foreign Policy Concept, our country is characterised as an original civilisation-state. This wording clearly and concisely reflects how we understand not only our own development, but also the main principles of international order, which we hope will prevail.

From our perspective, civilisation is a multifaceted concept subject to various interpretations. There was once an outwardly colonial interpretation whereby there was a “civilised world” serving as a model for the rest, and everyone was supposed to conform to those standards. Those who disagreed were to be coerced into this “civilisation” by the truncheon of the “enlightened” master. These times, as I said, are now in the past, and our understanding of civilisation is quite different.

First, there are many civilisations, and none is superior or inferior to another. They are equal since each civilisation represents a unique expression of its own culture, traditions, and the aspirations of its people. For instance, in my case, it embodies the aspirations of my people, of which I am fortunate to be a part.

Outstanding thinkers from around the world who endorse the concept of a civilisation-based approach have engaged in profound contemplation of the meaning of “civilisation” as a concept. It is a complex phenomenon comprised of many components. Without delving too deeply into philosophy, which may not be appropriate here, let’s try to describe it pragmatically as it applies to current developments.

The essential characteristics of a civilisation-state encompass diversity and self-sufficiency, which, I believe, are two key components. Today’s world rejects uniformity, and each state and society strives to develop its own path of development which is rooted in culture and traditions, and is steeped in geography and historical experiences, both ancient and modern, as well as the values held by its people. This is an intricate synthesis that gives rise to a distinct civilisational community. Its strength and progress depend on its diversity and multifaceted nature.

Russia has been shaped over centuries as a nation of diverse cultures, religions, and ethnicities. The Russian civilisation cannot be reduced to a single common denominator, but it cannot be divided, either, because it thrives as a single spiritually and culturally rich entity. Maintaining the cohesive unity of such a nation is a formidable challenge.

We have faced severe challenges throughout the centuries; we have always pulled through, sometimes at great cost, but each time we learned our lessons for the future, strengthening our national unity and the integrity of the Russian state.

This experience we have gained is truly invaluable today. The world is becoming increasingly diverse, and its complex processes can no longer be handled with simple governance methods, painting everyone with the same brush, as we say, which is something certain states are still trying to do.

There is something important to add to this. A truly effective and strong state system cannot be imposed from the outside. It grows naturally from the civilisational roots of countries and peoples, and in this regard, Russia is an example of how it really happens in life, in practice.

Relying on your civilisation is a necessary condition for success in the modern world, unfortunately a disorderly and dangerous world that has lost its bearings. More and more states are coming to this conclusion, becoming aware of their own interests and needs, opportunities and limitations, their own identity and degree of interconnectedness with the world around them.

I am confident that humanity is not moving towards fragmentation into rivaling segments, a new confrontation of blocs, whatever their motives, or a soulless universalism of a new globalisation. On the contrary, the world is on its way to a synergy of civilisation-states, large spaces, communities identifying as such.

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At the same time, civilisation is not a universal construct, one for all – there is no such thing. Each civilisation is different, each is culturally self-sufficient, drawing on its own history and traditions for ideological principles and values. Respecting oneself naturally comes from respecting others, but it also implies respect from others. That is why a civilisation does not impose anything on anyone, but does not allow anything to be imposed on itself either. If everyone lives by this rule, we can live in harmonious coexistence and in creative interaction between everyone in international relations.

Of course, protecting your civilisational choice is a huge responsibility. It's a response to external infringements, the development of close and constructive relationships with other civilisations and, most importantly, the maintenance of internal stability and harmony. All of us can see that today the international environment is, regrettably, unstable and quite aggressive, as I pointed out.

Here is one more essential thing: nobody should betray their civilisation. This is the path towards universal chaos; it is unnatural and, I would say, disgusting. For our part, we have always tried and continue to try to offer solutions that consider the interests of all sides. But our counterparts in the West seem to have forgotten the notions of reasonable self-restraint, compromise and a willingness to make concessions in the name of attaining a result that will suit all sides. No, they are literally fixated on only one goal: to push through their interests, here and now, and do it at any cost. If this is their choice, we will see what comes of it.

It sounds like a paradox, but the situation could change tomorrow, which is a problem. For example, regular elections can lead to changes on the domestic political stage. Today a country can insist on doing something at any cost, but its domestic political situation could change tomorrow, and they will start pushing through a different and sometimes even the opposite idea.

A standout example is Iran's nuclear programme. A US administration pushed through a solution, but the succeeding administration turned the matter the other way around. How can one work in these conditions? What are the guidelines? What can we rely on? Where are the guarantees? Are these the "rules" they are telling us about? This is nonsense and absurd.

Why is this happening, and why does everybody seem comfortable with it? The answer is that strategic thinking has been replaced with the short-term mercenary interests of not even countries or nations, but the succeeding groups of influence. This explains the unbelievable, if judged in Cold War terms, irresponsibility of the political elite groups, which have shed all fear and shame and think of themselves as guiltless.

The civilisational approach confronts these trends because it is based on the fundamental, long-term interests of states and peoples, interests that are dictated not

by the current ideological situation, but by the entire historical experience and legacy of the past, on which the idea of a harmonious future rests.

If everyone were guided by this, there would be far fewer conflicts in the world, I believe, and the approaches to resolving them would become much more rational, because all civilisations would respect each other, as I said, and would not try to change anyone based on their own notions.

Friends, I read with interest the report prepared by the Valdai Club for today's meeting. It says that everyone is currently striving to understand and imagine a vision of the future. This is natural and understandable, especially for intellectual circles. In an era of radical change, when the world we're used to is crumbling, it is very important to understand where we are heading and where we want to be. And, of course, the future is being created now, not only before our eyes, but by our own hands.

Naturally, when such massive, extremely complex processes are underway, it is hard or even impossible to predict the result. Regardless of what we do, life will make adjustments. But, at any rate, we need to realise what we are striving for, what we want to achieve. In Russia, there is such an understanding.

First. We want to live in an open, interconnected world, where no one will ever try to put artificial barriers in the way of people's communication, their creative fulfilment and prosperity. We need to strive to create an obstacle-free environment.

Second. We want the world's diversity to be preserved and serve as the foundation for universal development. It should be prohibited to impose on any country or people how they should live and how they should feel. Only true cultural and civilisational diversity will ensure peoples' wellbeing and a balance of interests.

Third, Russia stands for maximum representation. No one has the right or ability to rule the world for others and on behalf of others. The world of the future is a world of collective decisions made at the levels where they are most effective, and by those who are truly capable of making a significant contribution to resolving a specific problem. It is not that one person decides for everyone, and not even everyone decides everything, but those who are directly affected by this or that issue must agree on what to do and how to do it.

Fourth, Russia stands for universal security and lasting peace built on respect for the interests of everyone: from large countries to small ones. The main thing is to free international relations from the bloc approach and the legacy of the colonial era and the Cold War. We have been saying for decades that security is indivisible, and that it is impossible to ensure the security of some at the expense of the security of others. Indeed, harmony in this area can be achieved. You just need to put aside haughtiness and arrogance and stop looking at others as second-class partners or outcasts or savages.

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Fifth, we stand for justice for all. The era of exploitation, as I said twice, is in the past. Countries and peoples are clearly aware of their interests and capabilities and are ready to rely on themselves; and this increases their strength. Everyone should be given access to the benefits of today's world, and attempts to limit it for any country or people should be considered an act of aggression.

Sixth, we stand for equality, for the diverse potential of all countries. This is a completely objective factor. But no less objective is the fact that no one is ready to take orders anymore or make their interests and needs dependent on anyone, above all on the rich and more powerful.

This is not just the natural state of the international community, but the quintessence of all of humankind's historical experience. These are the principles that we would like to follow and that we invite all of our friends and colleagues to join.

Colleagues!

Russia was, is and will be one of the foundations of this new world system, ready for constructive interaction with everyone who strives for peace and prosperity, but ready for tough opposition against those who profess the principles of dictatorship and violence. We believe that pragmatism and common sense will prevail, and a multipolar world will be established.

In conclusion, I would like to thank the forum's organisers for your fundamental and qualified preparations, as always, as well as thank everyone at this anniversary meeting for your attention. Thank you very much.

Vladimir Putin

Address von the plenary session of the World Russian People's Council

28.11.2023

Your Holiness [Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia], friends,

I would like to welcome all the participants in the World Russian People's Council.

The Council was established in 1993. We remember that time as a very difficult turning point for the country. The Council managed to unite around a common set of goals representatives of the Russian Orthodox Church and other religious organisations, political parties and movements, cultural workers, scholars and scientists, entrepreneurs and people of different beliefs, views and ethnicities who were nonetheless united in one important respect, in their firmly rooted patriotism.

First of all, I want to thank you for your support and contribution to strengthening the Russian state, civil peace and accord, and consolidating society, and for the help you always offer to your compatriots and everybody who is part of the big Russian world.

I know that many representatives of the World Russian People's Council are currently in Donbass and Novorossiia as volunteers and members of military units, protecting our brothers and sisters, millions of people in the Donetsk and Lugansk people's republics, the Kherson and Zaporozhye regions, alongside their brothers-in-arms. I sincerely value the help that the World Russian People's Council provides to the front and the families of our fallen heroes. They fought for us and for our Motherland. They will rest in peace and remain in our memory for eternity. Let us observe a moment of silence.

Friends, our fight for sovereignty and justice is, without exaggeration, one of national liberation, because we are upholding the security and well-being of our people, and our supreme historical right to be Russia – a strong independent power, a civilisation state. It is our country, it is the Russian world that has blocked the way of those who aspired to world domination and exceptionalism, as it has happened many times in history.

We are now fighting not just for Russia's freedom but for the freedom of the whole world. We can frankly say that the dictatorship of one hegemon is becoming decrepit. We see it, and everyone sees it now. It is getting out of control and is simply dangerous for others. This is now clear to the global majority. But again, it is our country that is now at the forefront of building a fairer world order. And I would like to stress this: without a sovereign and strong Russia, no lasting and stable international system is possible.

We know the threat we are opposing. Russophobia and other forms of racism and neo-Nazism have almost become the official ideology of Western ruling elites. They are directed not only against ethnic Russians, but against all groups living in Russia: Tatars, Chechens, Avars, Tuvinians, Bashkirs, Buryats, Yakuts, Ossetians, Jews, Ingush, Mari and

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Altai. There are many of us, I might not be able to name every group now, but again, the threat is directed against all the peoples of Russia.

The West has no need for such a large and multi-ethnic country as Russia as a matter of principle. Our diversity and unity of cultures, traditions, languages, and ethnicities simply do not fit into the logic of Western racists and colonisers, into their cruel plans for total depersonalisation, separation, suppression, and exploitation. That is why they have started their old rant again: they say that Russia is a “prison of nations” and that Russians are a “nation of slaves.” We have heard this many times throughout the centuries. Now we have also heard that Russia apparently needs to be “decolonised.” But what do they really want? They want to dismember and plunder Russia. If they cannot do it by force, they sow discord.

I would like to emphasise that we view any outside interference or provocations to incite ethnic or religious conflict as acts of aggression against our country, and an attempt to once again wield terrorism and extremism as a weapon against us, and we will respond accordingly.

We have a large and diverse country. This diversity of cultures, traditions and customs creates greater strength, a tremendous competitive advantage and potential. We must continuously strengthen it, treasure this diverse accord, which is our common asset. I would like all the regional governors to focus on this, and I count on the authority of the pastors in our traditional religions and the responsibility of all political forces and public organisations.

I believe we all remember, and must remember, the lessons of the 1917 revolution, the subsequent Civil War, and the disintegration of the USSR in 1991. It may seem like many years have passed since then, but people of all ethnicities living today, even those born in the 21st century are still paying now, decades later, for the miscalculations made at that time – indulgences in separatist illusions, the weakness of the central authority, and a policy of artificial, forced division in this large Russian nation, a triune of Russians, Belarusians and Ukrainians. The bloody conflicts that emerged after the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union not only continue to smoulder but sometimes flare up with renewed energy. These wounds will not be healed for a long time.

We will never forget these mistakes and should not repeat them. I would like to emphasise once again – any attempt to sow ethnic or religious discord, to split our society is betrayal, a crime against all of Russia. We will never allow anyone to divide Russia – the only country we have. Our prayers are for this, our homeland, and they are expressed in different languages.

I would like to recall for this audience the words of St Gregory of Nazianzus: “Honouring your mother is a sacred thing. But everyone has their own mother, whereas the Motherland is our common mother.”

Your Holiness, colleagues. The theme of this Council session is “The Present and Future of the Russian World.” The Russian world embraces all generations of our predecessors and our descendants that will live after us. The Russian world means Ancient Rus, the Tsardom of Muscovy, the Russian Empire, the Soviet Union, and modern Russia that is reclaiming, consolidating, and augmenting its sovereignty as a global power. The Russian World unites all those who feel a spiritual affinity with our Motherland, who consider themselves Russian speakers, and carriers of Russian history and culture regardless of their ethnicity or religion.

But I would like to emphasise that the Russian world and Russia itself do not and cannot exist without Russians as an ethnicity, without the Russian people. This statement does not contain any claim to superiority, exclusivity or chosenness. This is simply a fact just like our Constitution’s clear definition of the status of the Russian language as the language of a state-forming nation.

Being Russian is more than a nationality. By the way, this has always been the case throughout our country’s history. Among other things, it includes cultural, spiritual, and historical identity. Being Russian is, above all, a responsibility. To reiterate, it is about the enormous responsibility to safeguard Russia, and this is what true patriotism is all about. As a Russian, I am here to say that only a united, strong, and sovereign Russia can guarantee the future and independent development of the Russian people and all other peoples who have lived within the borders of our country for centuries and are united by a common historical destiny.

What does sovereignty mean for our state, for each family, and for each person? What is its value and true essence? Primarily, it is freedom. Freedom for Russia and our people and, therefore, for each one of us, because in our tradition, a person cannot feel free unless his loved ones, his children and his Fatherland are free. Our soldiers and officers, men and women of our country, are defending this genuine freedom.

A free nation that understands its responsibility before current and future generations is the only source of power, sovereign power, which is called upon to serve all people, rather than someone’s private, corporate, class, or even foreign interests.

A truly free person is a creator. We will support everyone’s aspiration to be useful to the country, society, and people. This is what sovereign development in the national interests is made of.

We are faced with the daunting task of developing vast areas from the Pacific to the Baltic Sea and the Black Sea. Our economy, industry, agriculture, innovative industries,

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creative industries, and national businesses must increase their capacity multiple times over.

I am now reaching out to entrepreneurs who I know are many in this audience. I would like to thank you, friends, for your coordinated efforts. We have thwarted the unprecedented economic aggression of the West by uniting the efforts of the state and business. Its sanctions Blitzkrieg has failed.

Russia will step up support for sovereign national entrepreneurship. We have fundamentally new tools being developed for that right now. Invest in Russia, create new jobs, expand production, and participate in personnel training. If you do that, the national economy will grow, creating more success and opportunities for your companies. By focusing on strengthening sovereignty, national businesses are growing stronger and more sovereign themselves as they shed dependence on the components of the current world order.

The sovereign development of the country, its economy, business, the social sector should bring well-being to all people, all Russian families, and, thus, be fair. This is not about a primitive one-size-fits-all approach. Justice means primarily decent living conditions, modern facilities for culture, healthcare and sports in all regions of the country. This means a qualified and well-paid job and high public prestige for workers, engineers, teachers, doctors, artists, cultural figures, entrepreneurs, every responsible specialist and master. Justice means equal, broad opportunities for study, for a start in life and self-fulfilment for youth.

The West is now pursuing a “cancel culture” policy, but this is, in fact, a renunciation of humanitarian education. As a result, both culture and education are becoming primitive. Many traditional subjects are simply being thrown out of Western academic programmes and replaced by some gender or other similar sciences – pseudo sciences, of course. In the meantime, we need a real breakthrough in cultural life. And we have a lot to learn in this respect from our predecessors that set the tone for the entire world in both traditional and, by the way, avant-garde art. I am convinced that the country’s sovereignty and strengthening its role in the world are impossible without a flourishing, distinctive culture in all of its manifestations.

And, of course, we should take all the best achievements made by the domestic and global systems of traditional education. Importantly, our schools and universities must be modern and open to all advanced ideas.

We need an integral holistic approach to education with family, education, national culture, children’s, youth, sports and military-patriotic organisations, large-scale mentoring movements; and let me add, the wise word of our spiritual clergy harmoniously supplement each other. The latter is simply essential.

Yes, the Church is separate from the state and the Patriarch [Kirill] has told me more than once that despite this fact we have developed unique relations between the Church and the state. I would like to note in this context that the Church cannot be separated from society or from people. I fully agree with this. And this is why I would like to emphasise again the importance of the participation of representatives of all traditional Russian religions in the education and upbringing of our youth, and of course, in the consolidation of spiritual, moral, and family values. The involvement of the clergy from all traditional religions is an enduring value.

[...] ²⁸

Your Holiness, friends, we have many ambitious goals before us, and fulfilling them requires a truly concerted effort, which we are ready for. We have become stronger. Our historical regions have returned to Russia. Society is rejecting everything superficial and turning to true and genuine values.

Pyotr Stolypin emphasised that law based on national power takes precedence. Together, we have shown such national strength and national will, the determination to uphold our fundamental interests, the fundamental interests of the people of Russia, to be guided not by someone else's borrowed views, but by our own sovereign worldviews, our understanding of how the family and the entire country should live, and to build Russia for ourselves and our children.

[...] ²⁹

Now, concerning the fact that, 12 years after the Great Patriotic War, the entire world learned the Russian word “sputnik,” it signifies the progress that the country was able to achieve even during the most difficult times. I want to emphasise that it became possible because, even during the most critical moments of the Great Patriotic War, our nuclear physicists and missile developers continued to work on those technologies, on what was strategically important and necessary, even though at that time, there was nothing more important than, say, guarding the front or achieving another victory on the battlefield. However, the country always thought about the future.

Thank you for your applause.

Finally, I would like to draw your attention to certain things that the Holy Patriarch mentioned. He quoted a Soviet song, “We will destroy the old world...” and so on. As His Holiness said, we will create a new building on the debris. That was what the Soviet government planned after the 1917 Socialist revolution. Everything seemed to be debris. But I believe that it was not debris but seeds from which a new Russian and Soviet statehood grew. Because only 24 years later, despite all the attempts to root out both

²⁸ About declaring 2024 as the Year of the Family in Russia.

²⁹ Thanks to Kirill, the Patriarch.

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the religious mindset and our cultural roots... Still, 24 years later... Let me just remind you, the Great Patriotic War started – and what happened? Remember how Molotov addressed the Soviet people with news about the war breaking out? How did he address them? “Citizens.” And, a few days later, Stalin addressed them as “brothers and sisters.” They immediately remembered about God, church and our eternal traditions.

The same continues today. It is not possible to root it out. It is the very essence of Russia and our nation. We will always look forward and move forward while relying on our centuries-long traditions and spiritual roots.

Thank you for doing this. Thank you and all the best.

Polski Instytut Spraw Międzynarodowych (PISM) jest jednym z najważniejszych i największych ośrodków analitycznych w Europie Środkowej i Wschodniej. Sytuując się pomiędzy światem polityki a niezależną analizą, PISM zapewnia wsparcie decydom i dyplomatom, inicjuje publiczną debatę ekspercką oraz upowszechnia wiedzę o współczesnych stosunkach międzynarodowych. Działalności PISM przyświeca przekonanie, że proces podejmowania decyzji na arenie międzynarodowej powinien się opierać w jak największym stopniu na wiedzy płynącej z rzetelnych i wiarygodnych badań.