

The Alphen Group (TAG)

A COMPREHENSIVE STRATEGY TO SECURE UKRAINE'S FUTURE

February 2023

"The European Council demands that Russia immediately ceases its military actions, unconditionally withdraws all forces and military equipment from the entire territory of Ukraine and fully respects Ukraine's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence within its internationally-recognized borders".

European Council Conclusions, 24 February 2022

The Alphen Group

Dr Franco Algieri,
General (Ret.) John R. Allen,
Dr Jordan Becker,
Dr Robert Bell,
Lieutenant General (Ret.) Rob Bertholee
Dr Hans Binnendijk,
Brigadier General (Ret.) Robbie Boyd,
Professor Yves Boyer,
Lieutenant General (Ret.) Heinrich Brauss
Dr John Bruni,
Ian Brzezinski,
Kate Hansen Bundt,
Professor Paul Cornish,
Judy Dempsey,
Lieutenant General (Ret.) Arne Bard Dalhaug,
Professor Marta Dassu,
Major General (Ret.) Gordon Davis,
Slawomir Debski,
Konstantin Eggert,
General (Ret.) Sir James Everard,
Brigadier General (Ret.) Rainer Meyer zum Felde,
Keir Giles,
Dr Camille Grand,
Lieutenant General (Ret.) Giles Hill,
Lieutenant General (Ret.) Ben Hodges,
Dr Rich Hooker,
Dr Sarah Kirchberger,
Imants Liegis,
Professor Neil MacFarlane,
Professor Julian Lindley-French (Project Director and Lead Writer),
Senator Stephen Loosely,
Edward Lucas,
Dr Claudia Major,
Professor Andrew Michta,
Professor Zaneta Ozolina,
Admiral (Ret.) Giampaolo di Paola,
Air Chief Marshal (Ret.) Sir Stuart Peach,
Eric Povel,
Trygve Refvem,
General (Ret.) Lord (David) Richards,
Ambassador (Ret.) Alessandro Minuto Rizzo,
Professor Peter Roberts,
Colin Robertson,
Professor Sten Rynning,
Professor Em. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer,
Professor Paul Schulte,
Dr Alexandra Schwarzkopf,
General (Ret.) Sir Richard Shirreff,
Dr Stan Sloan,
General (Ret.) Sir Rupert Smith
Ambassador (Ret.) Carsten Sondergaard,
Professor Georges-Henri Soutou,
Ambassador (Ret.) Stefano Stefanini,
Dr Harlan Ullman
James J. Townsend,
Patrick Turner,
Ambassador (Ret.) Alexander Vershbow,
Anna Wieslander,
Professor Rob de Wijk,
Professor Tomonori Yoshizaki

ABSTRACT

As Russia's war of aggression enters its second year, the Western definition of success must remain the re-establishment of Ukraine as a secure and sovereign European democracy with all the rights and responsibilities that entails. The critical issue the TAG Ukraine Strategy 2023 (the Strategy) thus addresses is the scope and extent of Western support required to reinforce that goal across the diplomatic, informational, military and economic domains. For the purpose of the Strategy, "the West" encompasses the Euro-Atlantic Community and those members of the G7 and beyond, such as Australia, Japan and South Korea, the policies of which are largely aligned.

Specific aims are threefold:

- To bring the war to an end on terms acceptable to Kyiv that deny the Russians the fruits of aggression and ensure that Russia does not invade Ukraine again;
- To restore Ukraine as an independent state in full control of its internationally-recognized borders, with the capability to deter and defeat any further Russian aggression; and thereby
- To demonstrate to any potential aggressors that the democratic nations will defend the rules-based international order.

2023 will be the decisive year of the Russian-Ukraine war. The prospect of a total Russian victory that would see the complete dismemberment of an independent Ukrainian state, although by no means impossible, seems remote. However, Ukraine will only prevail with sustained and extensive Western support.

Continued Ukrainian advances and recovery of still-occupied territory cannot be assumed and Russia may have sufficient capability to repel Ukrainian offensives and force a stalemate. Russia enjoys far more strategic depth and industrial capacity than Ukraine which is precisely the reason why Western support remains indispensable.

Beyond the future of Ukraine, what is also at stake in the war is the West's capacity to shape its strategic environment and shape the European security order on its own terms in a way that upholds the principles of the rules-based international order established following World War Two. All and any collective action will involve risk.

A new European security system will be needed in order to restore respect for the principles of international law that Russia has violated and, over time, to lay the basis for a new relationship with Russia, whatever the outcome of the war. And, in the short term, it will also be indispensable in order to maintain a sufficient level of support from Western public opinion.

INTRODUCTION

The Russia-Ukraine war is entering its second and potentially decisive year with the outcome still uncertain. Now is the time to review western goals and consider the scope and parameters of a strategy sufficient to achieve them. That is the purpose of the TAG Ukraine strategy 2023.

The Strategy concerns the scope and extent of Western support that will be needed along diplomatic, informational, military and economic lines of engagement to bring the war to an end on terms acceptable to Kyiv that deny the Russians the fruits of aggression and ensure that Russia does not invade Ukraine again. The primary strategic goal is Ukrainian victory that would restore Ukraine as a sovereign, independent and democratic state in full control of its internationally-recognized borders and with the military capability and capacity to deter and defeat any further Russian aggression. An equally important goal of the Strategy is for the West to demonstrate to other potential aggressors that the democratic nations are fully prepared to defend the rules-based international order established following World War Two.

What is at stake over the medium-to-longer term is the West's capacity to shape its strategic environment in a way that upholds the principles of the rules-based international order. There are two principal scenarios pertinent to contemporary Western strategy: a stalemate that leads to a protracted war of attrition or frozen conflict; or a significant Ukrainian victory. Both scenarios involve risk. A Ukrainian victory risks the threat of major escalation by Russia to avoid defeat. The risks posed by a frozen conflict or a long war are continued threats to Ukraine's security or pressure to engage in negotiations which force unwanted concessions on Ukraine. Whilst the West is rightly working for a Ukrainian victory, it also needs to be prepared to manage both sets of risks.

The danger of a rapid escalation of the war remains very serious. Short of direct military intervention, the West's ability to determine the outcome of the war will remain limited, even if the prospect of a total Russian victory which would see the complete occupation of Ukraine, although by no means impossible, seems remote. Another full-scale Russian offensive that threatened western Ukraine could still trigger an unprecedented western response, and with it the potential for direct conflict with Western forces and even nuclear escalation of the conflict.

Therefore, the West should adopt a dual-track strategy and apply sticks and offer carrots in pursuit of a legitimate and just peace. An effective Western strategy in direct support of Ukraine will need to be comprehensive and enacted across diplomatic, informational, military and economic (DIME) lines of engagement. It will also need to be applied consistently, cohesively, but above all, courageously. A political solution to the war will also need to be sought in parallel. Any such demarche will necessarily include conceiving of different possible outcomes and differing possible post-war security systems in and across Europe. A future European security architecture will be indispensable in the longer term if respect for the principles of international law that Russia has violated is to be restored. It will also be vital as the basis for a new relationship with Russia, whatever the outcome of the war.

Reform in Ukraine will be vital and Western sticks must also extend to Kyiv in its battle against corruption. The firing by Zelensky of several corrupt senior Ukrainians in early 2023 is a good start but must go far further. Much of the scope and timing of the reconstruction effort will also depend on different scenarios to consider post-2023 depending on developments in the war. But central to any such strategy will be EU and NATO cooperation on Ukraine and that co-operation will be immediately at risk if there is a perception of corruption or war-profiteering within the Ukrainian government.

STRATEGIC IMPLICATIONS

The Russian invasion constitutes the most serious act of aggression in the European security space since World War Two. It is in direct violation of the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, and the NATO-Russia Founding Act, together with many other agreements guaranteeing Ukraine's sovereignty into which Russia entered voluntarily. The impact of Russian aggression has been world-wide, most significantly in the energy and food security sectors with deep ripple effects across the global economy. Long-standing security and economic arrangements have been altered, not least by Finland and Sweden's abandonment of non-alignment, increased defence spending commitments in Europe, large-scale arms transfers to Ukraine, and major changes in public attitudes about security and Russia. And, in the aftermath of recent political trends in the United States, the war has reinforced the American bond with Europeans and within NATO to an extent not seen since the fall of the Berlin Wall. Such consequences directly contradict an essential Putin war aim in Ukraine: the weakening and possible decoupling of the US from its European allies and the erosion of the Atlantic Alliance.

The danger to Europe is clear. There can be no certainty that if the war drags on into 2024 and 2025 Russian popular attitudes towards the West may become even more hostile. Although Moscow continues to seek to end Ukraine's existence as a sovereign state, its narrative has shifted from the 'denazification' and 'de-militarization' of Ukraine, to emphasizing what Moscow calls an 'existential threat' to Russia posed by NATO and its support for Ukraine. Russia clearly considers itself to be in a broad confrontation with the Atlantic Alliance which could at some point justify direct Russian military action against NATO, even though this would be suicidal for the Putin regime.

The geopolitical landscape is also changing, although it is inchoate with China the great strategic variable. No peace in Ukraine nowadays can be considered without taking into account the position of China. Beijing continues to emphasise its partnership with Russia. However, China has also placed limits on its 'friendship without limits' relationship with Russia as the conflict has unfolded. Moscow's claim that both Crimea and the Donbas are part of the Russian Federation has also been effectively ignored by Beijing. Chinese leaders have also repeatedly upheld the principle of territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders in meetings with other former Soviet states, much to Russia's irritation. And, on at least two occasions, Chinese leaders have warned Moscow not to use or threaten the use of nuclear weapons in the conflict.

China's military aid to Russia has also been notable by and large by its absence. This has forced the Kremlin to buy cheap Iranian drones and seek to re-purchase helicopters, missiles and missile defence weapons already sold to clients around the world. Moscow has even been forced to remove computer chips from domestic appliances to offset the impact of Western sanctions on such technologies. Finally, the threat of Western sanctions on Chinese state enterprises and banks operating in Russia has seen several of them withdraw lines of credit to the Russians, suspend joint ventures, and even withdraw from Russia.

Members of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) have also been vocal, and in some cases openly hostile, to the Russian invasion of Ukraine. However, many states have taken no position, including an increasingly powerful group of major non-aligned states with India at its core, with some seemingly receptive to Russian propaganda about the West, and others simply happy to buy Russian oil and gas at a discount.

THE PRINCIPLES OF THE TAG STRATEGY

The TAG Ukraine Strategy is established on the following principles:

- Russian aggression and attempts to change borders by force must not be rewarded or legitimized in any way;
- Russia must pay reparations for the death and damage it has inflicted on Ukraine;
- There can be no de facto Russian veto over NATO's support for Ukraine and no secret deals with Moscow that undercut Ukraine's position;
- The lifting of sanctions on Russia will only come as a consequence of Russian action and only over time;
- The West must be able to determine the European security order on its own terms, including Ukraine's place in it; and
- A NATO-Russia war is avoided.

THE STRATEGY

Diplomatic

Short-term

A "Declaration for Ukraine" should be issued by Ukraine's NATO and EU partners (joined by other like-minded democracies – the West) to reaffirm their collective commitment to the restoration of full Ukrainian sovereignty within its internationally-recognised borders backed by some form of security guarantees to deter renewed Russian aggression and ensure Ukraine's long-term future.

The Declaration would explicitly state that unless serious peace negotiations are commenced forthwith, the West will release to Ukraine additional capabilities that have thus far been withheld and make clear that Russia's threat of possible use of nuclear weapons will not deter them.

The Declaration would reaffirm the critical importance of EU and NATO support for a secure, sovereign, and independent Ukraine. A public addendum to the Declaration, signed jointly by EU Member-States and NATO nations together with other coalition partners, will confirm the commitment to restore Ukraine's pre-2014 borders in exchange for a full withdrawal of Russian forces and cessation of hostilities.

The Declaration will also state that the West will seek to isolate Russia within international organizations; remove Russia completely from the SWIFT financial messaging system; impose a full trade and financial embargo on Russia; and use seized Russian financial assets for Ukrainian reconstruction.

The Declaration will state unequivocally that the door remains open for Ukraine's eventual NATO membership, although any such membership will be linked to the outcomes of extensive security sector reform. In the near term, NATO will assist Ukraine improve the resilience of its armed forces and help deter any further aggression. Particular efforts will be made to further strengthen the Enhanced Opportunities Partnership Programme, launched at the NATO Wales

Summit in 2014. Work will also commence on an accelerated and tailored Membership Action Plan (MAP) for Ukraine.

The West must insist on full integrity of Ukrainian sovereignty in return for assurances to Russia of sanctions relief if certain conditions are met and continue to be met, primarily the withdrawal of all Russian forces from Ukraine and binding pledges that Ukrainian sovereignty and territorial integrity will henceforth be respected.

Immunity from prosecution for alleged war crimes by individuals should not, however, be extended and nor should efforts to afford justice be seen as distinct from internal peace and reconciliation processes. Experience in the North of Ireland suggests not only the need for parallel tracks, but a long-term commitment to justice in many forms.

The West will increase efforts to fully align Turkey with NATO, EU and coalition goals and approaches. In return, Ankara should be offered renewed security guarantees. Other possible steps might include the re-opening of all aspects of the EU-Turkey relationship.

Moscow must be under no illusions as to the gravity should it resort to any use of weapons of mass destruction. The West has been, and must continue to be clear that such use would have "catastrophic consequences". Any WMD use could lead to direct NATO involvement and the imposition of the fullest range of harsh economic sanctions; offensive cyber-operations targeting critical Russian nodes and government operations; as well as focused retaliation such as the destruction of the Black Sea Fleet and Kerch Strait Bridge. While the emphasis would be on conventional responses, a nuclear response in kind should not be ruled out.

If Russia at any time prepares for another major ground offensive against Kyiv or advances west of the Dnipro River, the West will reserve the right to respond with more advanced and longer-range weapons for Ukraine and possibly the establishment of some form of air exclusionary measure to include a NATO-imposed No Fly Zone. Such an attack must be deterred even at the risk of escalation.

Medium-to-longer term

Discussions on Russia's place in the European security system will not take place in the foreseeable future. More likely is a period not unlike the Cold War in which Russia is contained, diplomacy is reduced to a minimum, and nuclear deterrence prevents further escalation.

A specially convened Conference of Democracies (a modern version of the Congress of Vienna) should be held in a major European capital to consider a post-war European security mechanism in light of Russia's aggression. The goal of the conference would be to restore respect for and compliance with the founding principles of the Helsinki Final Act, Paris Charter, and NATO-Russia Founding Act.

Future Planning Groups should be established and charged to discuss and agree on concrete confidence and security-building measures along four traditional lines of strategy: diplomatic, informational, military and economic.

Leadership will be critical. There are three possible vehicles for such leadership in declining order of likely effectiveness but rising in reverse order in terms of likelihood: the Alliance and the European Union working in lock-step; a so-called Contact Group of major NATO powers (US, UK, France, Germany, Poland and Italy); or an ad hoc leadership group of willing and able powers outside of formal institutional structures. If the latter, Ukraine's future security would also need to be guaranteed by a series of bilateral and multilateral security guarantees.

The war will continue to have severe economic, social and humanitarian consequences for Ukraine. Mitigation of such consequences will require finance, expertise and human resources. In such circumstances, process is as important as outcome and the EU is best placed to generate such change. Therefore, for all its many challenges declaring an accelerated track towards eventual Ukrainian membership of the EU should be put on the table, albeit subject to a range of caveats. The reforms required by the accession process would themselves contribute immensely to security and stability in the country and wider Europe.

The EU and NATO should also together launch a new regional strategy towards the Black Sea Region and the Caspian Sea Region. Any such architecture would need to include measures to end Russia's illegitimate occupation of Moldovan and Georgian territories (Transnistria, Abkhazia, South Ossetia) and to resolve these and other so-called frozen conflicts.

A much greater Western effort is needed to convince the likes of China and India to further withhold support from Russia. At this year's G7 Summit in Hiroshima, Japan, China and India should be invited to join a G7-Plus Contact Group charged with both preventing nuclear escalation and returning the conflict to an institutional framework. A major diplomatic demarche is also needed towards other important democracies, such as Brazil, Indonesia, Nigeria, the Philippines, and South Africa.

Chinese and Indian membership of a Contact Group will set a precedent for the involvement of such powers in European affairs, and thus balance European involvement in Asian affairs. One aim of such concentrated diplomatic efforts would be to induce India, China, and as many other states as possible to warn Russian elites of the lasting risks to Russia's reputation and national interests if Putin decides to escalate the war with weapons of mass destruction.

Informational

Short-term

The scope of a Ukrainian victory must be publicly declared: the restoration of Ukraine's territorial integrity is the goal and to that end, effective Western leadership is critical.

The West must also demonstrably and publicly plan to deal with Russian escalation across the spectrum of political, military, cyber, hybrid and other grey zone capabilities. This will include preparing Western publics for a protracted struggle in which they are targets.

Russian attacks could take manifold forms from a complete cut-off of energy supplies to Europe (including attacks on Norway and its energy exporting infrastructure); attacks on undersea communications networks, seriously disruptive cyber-attacks; targeting of military supply convoys; as well as greater restrictions on both Russian and Ukrainian exports of grain and other commodities such as fertilizer and sunflower oil.

Moscow must understand that any such attacks will be met with a response in kind. Attacks on critical energy and communications infrastructure would be especially dangerous, particularly undersea pipelines and telecommunications cables on which the West is deeply dependent. Short of general war with Russia, the West must be prepared for attacks on its commercial orbital constellations as well.

Effective strategic communications will be vital if Western public support for Ukraine in the West is to be sustained. All parties to the conflict, including Western publics, need to recognise that the war in Ukraine is one in which they too are involved and that they have a stake in an

outcome that denies Moscow the fruits of its aggression. To that end, messaging should be along several lines of communication with the overarching message that whilst the West is not at war with Russia what happens in Ukraine is vital for European and global security.

The messaging should be thus:

- Increased military support for Ukraine is the best way to guarantee Kyiv's ability to ultimately expel Russian forces from occupied territories; support at current levels could see the eventual ejection of Russian forces, but will likely take longer and come at a far higher cost;

- If the war turns into a protracted conflict, many thousands more will die and the threat of a wider war in Europe will be increased;

- If Western support for Ukraine is reduced, the Ukrainians will not be able to recover occupied territories and face the very real possibility over time of renewed Russian aggression that could also escalate to include EU and NATO nations;

- Sanctions will remain in effect until Russia ends its aggression, withdraws its forces from Ukraine and demonstrates in practice that it will respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of all of its neighbours;

- The West seeks over the long term to return to the path of cooperation that was so catastrophically interrupted by Russian aggression; but

- There is no possibility of a return to business as usual until Russia quits Ukraine and accepts its right to exist as an independent democratic nation.

Medium-to-longer term

The information space is also a strategic battlespace for which the West needs a consistent and coherent strategy over the medium-to-longer-term commensurate with realistic and legitimate strategic ambitions. The core message must be thus: Western support for Ukraine is vital to the upholding of international law and preventing Russian efforts to take Europe back to the law of the jungle which led to two world wars and millions of dead.

A multi-platform information campaign should also be undertaken against Russia to counter the propaganda of the regime with the narrative that whilst the West stands firm against Russian aggression, it does not seek to punish ordinary Russians. The West will also need to counter the growing narrative within Ukraine and its displaced people that the West has betrayed Ukraine by offering too little support, too late.

The strategic communications narrative would emphasise several points: Russia is already engaged in a hybrid war with the West; Ukraine is now an EU accession candidate and the investment Europeans are making must be protected; and, if Ukraine is lost to the West this would embolden not only Putin but other autocrats to attack their neighbours and annex their territories.

Military

Short-term

There are two principal military-strategic scenarios for 2023: 1) a successful Ukrainian counter-offensive that recovers further occupied territory; or 2) the Russia line holds and the conflict descends into a mutually deleterious and prolonged stalemate.

Conventional

Ukraine needs both firepower and manoeuvre capabilities and in sufficient numbers to prevail. Specifically, and at the very least, Ukraine will require continued, comprehensive military assistance including artillery ammunition, Western armoured fighting vehicles, advanced air defence systems, anti-tank munitions, training, intelligence support, and unmanned aircraft.

To realise such a strategy it is vital that Western decision-making structures are streamlined and weapons transfers markedly accelerated. Thus far, the West has conducted 'just in time' decision-making with regards to weapons transfers, which is no longer adequate as hostilities accelerate in 2023. Any such streamlining must be matched by an improved capacity to move weapons to Ukraine securely, with 'off-shore' training programmes for Ukrainian troops in Europe and North America markedly expanded.

There have been three phases of Western arms transfers. Phase one saw transfers of weapons devoted to stopping Russia's initial advance, such as NLAWs, Javelins and Stingers. It was successful. Phase two led to transfers of weapons that enabled Ukraine to reverse the large asymmetry in artillery and take the fight to Russia in the Donbas and southern Ukraine. Phase two was also successful.

Phase three has just begun and must be tailored specifically to enable Ukraine to break out of the current attrition-dominated stalemate and take the offensive to regain occupied territory with strength and at speed. Phase three will thus require additional mobility assets, most notably armour, air and missile defence, and possibly advanced strike aircraft. Additional training of Ukrainian personnel on the command and control of complex combined operations must also be undertaken. If Phase three is implemented vigorously, Ukraine should be able to recover its capacity for large-scale manoeuvres and regain more of its lost territory without escalating the conflict.

Specific phase three weapons systems now needed quickly and in sufficient quantity are:

- Modernised main battle tanks and armoured infantry fighting vehicles with reactive armour and thermal sights (such as Challenger 2, M1A1 Abrams and Leopard 2 variants) together with their requisite logistics and supply;

- Increased transfers of ammunition, more advanced rocket systems (i.e. HIMARS/MLRS, ground-launched small diameter bombs, and possibly geo-fenced, range-limited ATACMS). The focus for now should be on rapid implementation of the first three phases;

- There should also be consideration of a phase four should it be needed with the focus on equipment that could take the fight to Russia itself. This should be held in reserve to deter future Russian escalation; and

- This phase might include F-16s and long-range ATACMS, together with the Tactical Air Operations Centres (TAOC), and would be directly linked to Russian escalation. Other practical support will include enhanced intelligence provision by the West, above all the US, which has been essential to date. Military training outside of Ukraine has contributed significantly to the reinforcement of the Ukrainian Armed Forces and will need to be markedly accelerated and intensified.

Nuclear

NATO must also plan for the worst case, including the use of nuclear weapons. At present, a very significant element of Russia's military forces are engaged in Ukraine and any attack on NATO territory will draw the Alliance into the conflict and is thus unlikely. However, desperate regimes sometimes take desperate measures, especially if domestic support begins to falter and the Putin regime becomes threatened from within. Putin's nuclear options are thus:

- A tactical nuclear strike using a very low-yield weapon against one or several targets, depending on what Putin believes is required to force Kyiv's capitulation; and

- A strike against a city in Western Ukraine or a demonstration strike in the High North/Arctic aimed at scaring European, and especially German public opinion. The aim would be to exert public pressure on Western leaders to end their support for Ukraine and thus convince Zelensky to settle on Russian terms.

NATO must reconceive deterrence in light of the nuclear threat. Whilst responding in kind should remain an option, a range of sub-nuclear responses should be designed, including a massive cyber-attack on Russian forces and/or the Russian Government or the possible destruction by conventional means of Russia's ability to conduct the war.

<u>Medium-to-longer term</u>

There is now no justification for continuing to abide by the security assurances in the NATO-Russia Founding Act with regard to no permanent stationing of substantial combat forces on the territory of NATO members admitted after 1997. NATO must now move quickly to deploy conventional Allied forces, resources and infrastructure anywhere in its area of responsibility in support of Forward Defence. Any such commitment must include Finland and Sweden. The West has already taken a big step forward to strengthen the Euro-Atlantic Area with the prospective accession of Finland and Sweden.

NATO should also establish a Guarantee of Ukrainian Security (GUS) as an extension of the Alliance's Enhanced Opportunity Partner Programme. Under the Guarantee, the allies would commit themselves over the medium-to-longer-term to do all they can to assist Ukraine to defend itself, dissuade Russia from launching further aggression, and thus increase Kyiv's leverage in any eventual political settlement to the war.

The Guarantee will also build on the ongoing provision of military equipment and training, and be tailored to enhance Ukraine's resilience against cyber-attacks, disinformation, economic warfare, and political subversion over the long term. The Guarantee would also establish a function-driven form of partnership for Ukraine with NATO, making it a formal Alliance responsibility to help train and equip Ukrainian armed forces, and to facilitate their acquisition of modern defensive weapons, backed by common funding.

Economic

Short-term

Continued heavy economic sanctions will be critical to maintaining pressure on the Russian Federation. Economic sanctions against Russia, whilst severe, should still be strengthened further in the event of Russian escalation. Measures should include:

- Total exclusion from the SWIFT bank transfer system;
- Exclusion from US, UK and EU financial and other markets (including a ban on the sale of Russian sovereign debt);
- Further travel bans and confiscation of Russian assets and property held abroad; and
- Initiate legislation to authorize impoundment and use of Russian assets held in US and Partner financial institutions to pay for Ukrainian reconstruction.

Ukraine has already received extensive Western aid and there is much more to come. Ukraine should also be offered large-scale financial support, including access to low and no-interest loans and grants. However, a powerful oversight body composed of officials from the Bank of England, the European Central Bank and the US Federal Reserve must be quickly stepped up to ensure Western money is not lost to the large-scale corruption from which Ukraine continues to suffer.

Medium-to-longer term

The West should avoid helping Ukraine to prevail in the war, only to falter in sustaining the peace. Rebuilding Ukraine will be as much of a geopolitical challenge for the West as supporting Ukraine in the war. If the challenge is not met by Americans and Europeans, there is every chance Beijing would step in.

The initial reform effort will take the form of security sector reform and the establishment of democratic control over armed forces. However, far deeper structural reform of governance will also be demanded of the Ukrainians, including active and discernible measures with regard to government transparency and prevention of corruption. This is particularly important if future possible EU and/or NATO membership is to be offered.

Six primary and sequenced elements/phases of reconstruction would also be needed (based on a major 2022 study by the German Marshall Fund of the United States) underpinning the long-term commitment the West is now entering into with Ukraine:

- *Need:* Assistance efforts will need to be carefully and consistently co-ordinated with Ukraine to establish precisely the needs of the country. Over the medium term, stabilisation and reconstruction will be required to rebuild Ukraine's economy and infrastructure;
- *Structure:* Use existing frameworks reinforced by a "G7 plus Partners" construct to foster an equitable sharing of burdens;

- *Sequence:* The US will pay for 75% of the security assistance, whilst the rest of the G7 pays 25%. The G7, with European members (France, Germany, Italy and the UK) to the fore, would then pay for 75% of the recovery assistance whilst the US pays 25%;

- *Finance:* Financing would begin with public funding, but over time foreign direct investment from the private sector would take over. To assist with the transfer of funding from public to private investment some form of "war insurance" is also envisaged at the interface between security, stabilisation and reconstruction.; and

- *Accountability and rule of law:* Long-term funding must be linked to structural law reform and anti-corruption measures. Transparency would be vital with all recovery-related documents published.

LESSONS FROM THE WAR FOR NATO

War is a giant black hole into which people and materiel vanish at an alarming rate far beyond that envisaged by peacetime establishments. Consequently, there are two overarching lessons for the Alliance from the Russian-Ukraine War. First, NATO's Deterrence and Defence Posture across Central and Eastern Europe must be reinforced to frustrate possible future Russian territorial ambitions. Second, whilst NATO's missions and tasks were stated clearly in the 2019 Military Strategy, the 2021 NATO Agenda and NATO Strategic Concept 2022 the Alliance must also learn the military-technical lessons already apparent.

The initial military-technical lessons for the Alliance are thus:

- Vulnerability of armour unsupported by infantry and helicopters in the battlespace;

- The vital need to dominate both fires and counter-fires;

- Vulnerability of deployed ground forces to expendable drones, strike drones and loitering systems allied to precision-guided munitions;

- More robust logistics forward deployed, with enhanced and far more secure military supply chains;

- More ready-action materiel, most notably small arms and tube and rocket artillery ammunition;

- Build more and rebuild infrastructure to accelerate military mobility in scale;

- Remove all legal impediments to rapid cross-border movements in a pre-war emergency; and

- Improve force protection of deployed forces, allied to a particular need to reduce the detectability and thus digital footprint of force concentrations.

CONSEQUENCES OF A PARTIAL RUSSIAN VICTORY

The longer the conflict continues, the greater the chance that support for Ukraine and for the sanctions imposed on Russia will degrade.

A stalemate, and thus a partial victory for Russia, would be comparable to the situation in the Korean Peninsula between North and South Korea. At best it would be a cease-fire, followed by an armistice. However, there would be no peace agreement and no formal recognition of the status quo. In such circumstances the likelihood would be increased that Ukraine's partners would become increasingly open to considering a negotiated settlement that left Russia in possession of at least some occupied territories in exchange for "peace." Any such outcome could also be a temporary way-station on the road to renewed Russian aggression, while the strategic and economic viability of a truncated Ukrainian state would be greatly reduced. Thereafter, the West would be forced into a major effort to protect and defend the remainder of Ukraine, turning an independent country into a de facto Western protectorate.

It is precisely for these reasons why the Ukrainian government has repeatedly and publicly stated that Kyiv will not negotiate while Russian forces occupy Ukrainian territory. And, as long as military operations continue to show progress, President Zelensky is unlikely to alter his stance. Any attempt to force Ukraine to the table by withdrawing Western financial and military support would reward Russian aggression. It would also be opposed by an overwhelming majority of the Ukrainian population, as well as by NATO and EU members such as Poland, the UK, the Baltic States, and the Nordic States. The Russian/Ukrainian border and Belarusian/Ukrainian border areas would also likely become an ever more dangerous zone of militarized tension and a conduit for enforced mass migration into the EU.

Failure by the West to support Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity would also 'normalise' Russia's conduct of the war and the war itself. At the very least, such weakness would allow Russia to keep some of its ill-gotten gains in flagrant violation of the UN charter and Helsinki principles. It could also encourage similar aggression on the part of a future Russia, not to mention accelerating Chinese ambitions to return Taiwan to the motherland by force. Even a partial Russian victory would undermine NATO and EU cohesion as member nations/states differed over accommodating or confronting Russia.

THE WAY AHEAD

The core aim of Western strategy must remain, and must continue to remain, the complete and irreversible withdrawal of Russian forces, an end to all shelling and rocket attacks on the Ukrainian people, and the restoration of normal democratic governance across Ukraine's territory.

However, a wider strategy must also be embraced by the West. Russia is seeking to tear down the rules-based order with the massive use of Russian power and illegitimate coercion using all other possible means. It is precisely such coercion that the West is confronting in Ukraine with Ukrainians and which must be contained and then ended. History suggests that only when Russia has acknowledged the West's countervailing power will rules and all-important institutionalised structure be re-established. In Europe, such structure is particularly important.

Therefore, when negotiations for an enduring and equitable peace agreement do eventually begin there must be no territorial compromise. That said, the West, in consultation with Kyiv,

must also consider its minimum conditions for a peace settlement beyond a mere cease-fire precisely so that serious negotiations may begin. Those conditions might include:

- Any eventual peace agreement would be linked to Russia's future behaviour, and not just to ending its use of force in Ukraine;
- Effective security guarantees for Ukraine, as part of which the West excludes nothing in advance, including NATO membership, and with no repeat of the failed 1994 Budapest Memorandum;
- OSCE-guaranteed language and other 'rights' for Russian speakers in Eastern and South-Eastern Ukraine, in tandem with similar guarantees by Russia for ethnic Ukrainians and Crimean Tatars;
- A lease-back deal for the Black Sea Fleet's base in Sevastopol could be considered, coupled with guarantees that Crimea will not be used as a base for aggression against Ukraine as in 2014;
- Reparations by Russia to Ukraine; and
- An immediate and expanded Association Agreement with the EU and Ukrainian membership of both the EU and NATO by 2033.

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

DIPLOMATIC:

- ISSUE A NEW DECLARATION FOR UKRAINE TO MAXIMIZE WESTERN COHESION AND FURTHER DETER RUSSIA.
- PURSUE MORE VIGOROUS DIPLOMATIC MEASURES WITH CHINA TO SEEK THEIR INTERVENTION TO END THE WAR.
- CLARIFY FURTHER FOR RUSSIA THE CONSEQUENCES OF NUCLEAR USE OR ANOTHER MASSIVE INVASION OF WESTERN UKRAINE.
- CONVENE A CONFERENCE OF DEMOCRACIES TO BEGIN PLANNING THE POST WAR ORDER.
- MAINTAIN DIPLOMATIC CONTACT WITH MOSCOW TO THE MAXIMUM EXTENT POSSIBLE.
- PROVIDE ALL SUPPORT NECESSARY TO SUPPORT UKRAINIAN EFFORTS TO HOLD RUSSIANS ACCOUNTABLE FOR WAR CRIMES.

INFORMATIONAL:

- PREPARE WESTERN PUBLICS FOR THE BROAD CONSEQUENCES OF A PROTRACTED WAR.
- ESCALATE THE INFORMATION CAMPAIGN IN RUSSIA TO COUNTER THE KREMLIN'S NARRATIVE.
- MAINTAIN A HIGH LEVEL OF PUBLIC SUPPORT FOR ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE.

- PUBLICLY DEFINE THE MEANING OF A UKRAINIAN VICTORY IN WHICH THE FULL RESTORATION OF UKRAINE'S TERRITORIAL INTEGRITY IS THE GOAL.

MILITARY:

- STREAMLINE DECISION MAKING ON ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE.
- INCREASE THE PACE AND VOLUME OF WEAPONS TRANSFERS TO UKRAINE DESIGNED TO ALLOW THEM TO RETAKE OCCUPIED TERRITORY, WHILE REFRAINING FROM ATTACKS ON RUSSIAN TERRITORY WITH WESTERN ARMS.
- SEEK TO DETER AND PREPARE TO DEAL WITH FURTHER RUSSIAN ESCALATION SHOULD IT COME.
- TAKE ADDITIONAL STEPS TO GUARANTEE UKRAINE'S LONG-TERM SECURITY, INCLUDING SECURITY GUARANTEES AND EVENTUAL NATO MEMBERSHIP.
- AVOID THE TEMPTATION TO SLOW EFFORTS TO FURTHER STRENGTHEN THE NATO ALLIANCE BECAUSE RUSSIA WILL REBUILD ITS FORCES IN ITS LONG-TERM STRUGGLE WITH THE ALLIANCE.

ECONOMIC:

- MAINTAIN AND FURTHER STRENGTHEN SANCTIONS; THERE IS MUCH MORE THAT CAN BE DONE.
- CONTINUE TO PROVIDE SHORT-TERM ECONOMIC AID AND BUDGET SUPPORT TO UKRAINE TO COUNTER RUSSIA'S EFFORT TO UNDERCUT UKRAINE'S WILL TO FIGHT.
- PASS WESTERN LEGISLATION AS NEEDED TO ALLOW SEQUESTERED RUSSIAN FINANCIAL RESERVES TO BE USED FOR UKRAINIAN RECONSTRUCTION.
- PREPARE FOR A MASSIVE MARSHALL-STYLE PLAN FOR UKRAINE ONCE THE CONFLICT ENDS.

The Alphen Group,
February 2023