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Review article

UKRAINE CRISIS AS A GLOBAL SECURITY CHALLENGE

Abstract

Russia's invasion of Ukraine - Europe's worst security crisis in decades - has prompted the EU to make unprecedented decisions on EU security, defence and enlargement. For the first time, decisions have been made to deliver deadly weapons to a third country and decisions to strengthen defence co-operation amid a new perception of the threat. The 2001 Temporary Protection Directive, which grants temporary residence to Ukrainian refugees, was activated for the first time. The overwhelming support for the UN resolution condemning the Russian invasion clearly proves that countries around the world see the invasion as an attack on global norms. However, policy makers in certain countries are managing the crisis in terms of their national interest. This paper will analyse the differences in regional and national attitudes regarding the events in Ukraine, ie geopolitical, economic and security factors that influence decision-making to deal with the Ukrainian crisis.

Keywords: *crisis, international security, international relations, cooperation*

Introduction

If we read the works of Kissinger, Brzezinski, Huntington and many other top experts in international relations, we will conclude that the Ukrainian conflict was predictable long before 2014. After the Maidan revolution, it was already quite clear that it was only a matter of time before a bloody and uncontrolled conflict took place. On February 24, 2022, Russia, at the call of the Donetsk and Luhansk republics, launched its special operation in Ukraine aimed at demilitarizing the territory inhabited by a dominant Russian-speaking population. Although European leaders reiterated that they were surprised and did not believe in Russia's intentions, it soon became clear that there was no going back. Instead of finding a diplomatic way to implement the Minsk agreements, European leaders backed by their US allies, despite Russian opposition, reiterated that Ukraine's place is in NATO.

On March 2, 2022, the UN General Assembly, with 141 votes in favour, supported the resolution condemning the Russian invasion of Ukraine and called for the immediate withdrawal of Russian forces, emphasizing the growing isolation of Russia globally. Only five countries, Belarus, North Korea, Er-

itrea, Syria and Russia, opposed it. The vote was a positive signal for Ukraine and its Western allies, who throughout the crisis have argued that Russia's actions are not only a challenge to European security, but also a global challenge to the principles of sovereignty and non-use of force contained in the UN Charter. . Regarding the Russian annexation of Crimea and the Ukrainian crisis, relations between Europe, the United States and Russia are a set of reactions of the great powers. Different interests and historical ties with Eastern Europe and Russia have caused differences in decisions on certain issues by certain European countries and the United States. All measures taken are aimed at imposing sanctions and leaving the Russian market, strengthening the eastern wing of NATO in order to de-escalate the conflict and EU reforms in accordance with the Stabilization and Association Process introduced by the European Union in 1999. However, despite strong support for a resolution condemning Russia, there have been marked divisions among UN member states over how to respond to the crisis. China, India and South Africa - BRICS countries abstained. Brazil voted in favour, and African countries were divided, with 28 in favour of the resolution, 25 abstaining or not voting at all, while the Gulf Arab states voted in favour. Geopolitical factors, economic pressures and security threats, domestic political disputes have contributed to differing views at the regional and national levels on the Ukraine crisis. The conflict between Russia and Ukraine is a global security issue, but the answers of the states are conditioned by internal political problems and foreign policy priorities.

Both sides in the conflict have their own explanations for the roots of the conflict and the right to preserve or defend their national security. Ukraine claims that by applying for NATO membership it was trying to find a way to respond to Russia's aggressive policy on its territory, while Russia claims that the non-implementation of the Minsk Agreements, which were supposed to guarantee the rights of the Russian population, endangers life and the security of the Russian diaspora, and the application for NATO membership, on the other hand, endangers the security of the Russian Federation. Russia went a step further. Russian President Vladimir Putin has openly questioned the historical legitimacy of Ukraine's statehood and people, insisting that Russians and Ukrainians are "the same people" and that Ukraine's true sovereignty is possible only in partnership with Russia.

What is the purpose of the Russian invasion? The answer to this question must be sought in the essence of Russian geopolitics, which encompasses all of Moscow's decision-making methods. The primary imperative of Russian geopolitics is domestic political consolidation to protect against external threats whether coming from the local or global environment and expanding its regional influence, especially in the countries of the former Soviet Union but also and beyond.

NATO enlargement in to the states of the former Soviet bloc has undermined a key imperative for Russia. This has created a sense of insecurity in Moscow, both from neighbouring countries that are joining NATO and from

outside forces, primarily from the United States, which is a strong supporter of the Alliance's enlargement.

Between the 1990s and the early 2000s, Russia was too weak to stop NATO from expanding into Central Europe and the Baltic states. However, in the period between 2008 and 2014, Moscow was ready for combat in Georgia and Ukraine. In the process of decision making on military interventions in the former Soviet states, Russia's calculation is based on a strategic framework based on five conditions / variables: cause-event / situation; local support; expected military response; technical feasibility; and relatively low expected political and economic costs, especially when it comes to non-military response to military intervention, such as sanctions or diplomatic restrictions.

These five conditions were met in the case of Russia's military intervention in Georgia in 2008, which aimed to undermine Russia's aspirations to join NATO. Moscow's calculations were that Georgia is not a NATO member, so the Western Allies' response will be relatively limited and they will be able to easily manage costs. The Georgian military was much weaker than the Russian, which technically made military intervention easily feasible. The five-day Russian-Georgian war was reportedly fought over disputed territories, but Moscow's real goal was geopolitical. She punished the Georgians and warned others about NATO membership attempts, sending a clear message to Western allies that Russia was ready to use force to defend its interests outside its territory and eventually regain hegemony over the former Soviet Union.

Identical, in the case of Ukraine in 2014, all conditions were met. The Euromaidan revolution that toppled pro-Russian President of Ukraine Viktor Yanukovich was the reason for the beginning of the Russian intervention. The strongest local support for Russian intervention was in Crimea and the Donbas region in eastern Ukraine, but in the rest of the country support was limited. In Crimea, Russia has already had its troops, was logistically secured, and had direct access to the Donetsk and Luhansk regions. As in the case of Georgia, Ukraine is not a NATO member, and Moscow's assessment was that the Alliance would not intervene in the event of Russian military intervention. Russia's strategic goal was to overthrow Ukraine's new pro-Western government and block NATO membership. The end result of the military intervention was the annexation of Crimea and the ongoing conflict in eastern Ukraine. The result of the war that broke out in eastern Ukraine in 2014 was 14,000 dead and about 1.4 million displaced people, a predominantly Russian population.

Reaction to the Russian annexation of Crimea

Regarding the annexation of Crimea, we will consider the reaction of the great powers, which is essential for understanding the development of relations between Russia and Europe. As before in history, in times of other international crises, so in the case of Ukraine, the great powers are the ones who structure international relations. The Ukraine crisis directly involved countries with strong

ties to the post-Soviet region - Germany and Poland, and countries that were less involved in the conflict - the United States, France and the United Kingdom. These countries are shaping the model of international coalitions on the issue of Russia.

- For Germany, a major challenge was maintaining a consistent foreign policy, thus establishing itself as a key player in European-Russian affairs. Her leadership role was noted in her determination to respond with sanctions to Russia's annexation of Crimea, but on the other hand, in order to avoid escalation of the situation, she avoided deploying NATO forces while keeping the channels of communication with Russia open. In the early stages of the Ukraine crisis, Germany reacted with conciliatory rhetoric, in the sense that both Russia and Europe should work to stabilize the country and prevent the creation of new divisions in Europe. Germany has supported the creation of an OSCE-led Contact Group from an early stage (Boston Globe, 2014). However, after Russia's military invasion of Crimea and the annexation of the peninsula, Germany's position soon changed and it united with the other 27 EU and US members (Bundestag, 2014). Germany agreed to impose a travel ban and freeze the assets of Russian politicians and businessmen, and the G8 format no longer existed (ABC, 2014). As early as 2006, the German Foreign Ministry described their policy towards Russia as a policy of "rapprochement through economic entanglement", ie the most important bridge between Europe and Russia, and their greatest achievement would be Russia's successful integration into the international order based on rules. (Stelzenmüller, 2009) In general, Germany seeks to avoid risky confrontational moves that would risk upsetting the political balance with Russia and further creating domestic problems such as nationalism and militarism. (Chivvis and Rid, 2009) On the other hand, Germany's strong commitment to respect for international law has forced it to condemn the annexation of Crimea. The creation of German foreign policy at all levels fosters multilateralism, international rules and consensus building. (Krause, 2004) The annexation of Crimea was a challenge for German foreign policy, as Germany is a strong supporter of the EU's common foreign policy. The EU, like Germany, has consistently favoured the norms and rules of power in international relations. Also, German-Russian relations are important to Germany not only economically but also politically, as they all turn to Berlin as the main coordinator for the EU response. (Janning, 2015)

- Warsaw's position is the antithesis of Berlin's policies in terms of the demand for major military reinforcements in NATO members, giving support to Kyiv and calling for joint measures to punish and isolate Russia for its actions in Ukraine. The Ukraine crisis marked the rise of Poland from its marginal position as a new NATO member in 1999, among the top six most influential countries today. Poland has made great ef-

forts to provide Kyiv with a continuous western course. Given Poland's historical and diplomatic experience and the role it plays in Eastern Partnership politics, the EU considers Poland's role as a European leader on the Ukrainian issue and will not take any decisions on Ukraine without Poland. It opposes Russia's demands for the federalization of Ukraine and strongly advocates for Ukraine's EU membership (EU observer, 2014). Poland has initiated the deployment of the European Union Advisory Mission in Ukraine, a civilian mission of the European Union Common Security and Defence Policy. (EEAS, 2019) The aim was to assist the Ukrainian authorities in reforming the civilian security sector. At the request of the Ukrainian government, the mission officially began operations on December 1, 2014. (Deutsche Welle, 2015) In response to the annexation of Crimea, Poland, citing Article 4 of the North Atlantic Treaty, summoned NATO members to an emergency meeting to ask whether the annexation of Crimea was the first phase of Russian action in Ukraine.

Poland is one of the largest countries of the former communist states and, given its successful democratic transition, is considered a bridge between east and west. The unequivocal historical narrative forces Poland to a defensive-confrontational position towards Russia, support for Kyiv and the strengthened role of NATO.

- Regarding the United States, it is clear that they are in direct conflict with Russia and have expressed strong support for the pro-European forces in Ukraine at an early stage of the Russian-Ukrainian conflict. The seriousness of the disagreement over Ukraine has put the United States in a position to adjust and coordinate sanctions with the EU. Back in 2014, then-US Vice President Joe Biden, during a visit to Lithuania and Poland, said that no aggression against NATO allies would be tolerated. (White House, 2014) The United States stressed that they have powerful tools that can influence Russia's ability to access global banking and trading systems. (Zarate, 2014) The fall of the Berlin Wall was seen as a triumph of the United States' determination to defend freedom and democracy in Europe through NATO. Successful democratic transitions in Central and Eastern Europe in the 1990s and 2000s demonstrate the determination of the United States and its allies to enlarge the EU and NATO. Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014 by the United States was interpreted as an attack on the free will of the states. The United States won't allow Russia to overthrow the European security system. Sharing the burden with the EU in terms of its powerful economic resources has in the past proved to be a key factor in keeping Ukraine afloat. The Ukraine crisis has highlighted persistent dilemmas in promoting democracy and forced Western allies to take more decisive steps in terms of sanctions against Russia and the strengthening of NATO.

- France has sided with the United States in imposing tougher sanctions on Russia. Compared to its role as mediator in the Georgian conflict, when France sought to secure a consensus on the issue, this time it took an independent foreign policy stance, condemning Russia's annexation and urging dialogue to de-escalate the situation. (Reuters, 2014) France supported the suspension of Russia's participation in the G8 and cancelled a scheduled visit of Russia to its foreign and defence ministers, but decided not to cancel Putin's visit to France in June 2014 for to celebrate the seventieth anniversary of the landing in Normandy. France has threatened broader economic sanctions as pro-Russian separatists stormed government buildings in eastern Ukraine. France, on the other hand, not only opposed any mention of Ukraine's EU membership, but wanted to confirm that Ukraine would never become a member (EU observer, 2014). France's vision for the EU was described as a sort of confederation with concentric circles, centred on the Union's main carriers, than other circle for the ex-eastern states and the peripheral circle with states such as Turkey and Ukraine. (Adler-Nissen, 2014) France is a strong supporter of Article 5 of the NATO Treaty, with serious challenges to NATO's credibility as a collective defence alliance, but on the other hand, France has made it clear that military action in Ukraine is not in itself to be an option. (Minister of Defence, 2013)

- The United Kingdom has traditionally taken serious sanctions against Russia over its annexation of Crimea. Military cooperation and defence exports have been permanently reduced, and decisions have been made to reduce Europe's dependence on Russian energy exports, ie measures have been taken to protect against re-violation of international norms. (Guardian, 2014) The United Kingdom, despite the good relations with Russia developed over the years, decided to suspend all military cooperation and defence exports to Russia and called on its European allies to follow suit. Following Russia's military incursion into Crimea, the United Kingdom's foreign minister was the first senior Western official to visit Ukraine. The United Kingdom has called for serious NATO reinforcements and exercises in the Baltic States and Eastern European NATO member states as a way to reassure Russia of its resolve to abide by Article 5 of the NATO treaty. Russia's annexation of Crimea is a wake-up call for the United Kingdom, based on the fact that the United Kingdom's 2010 National Security Strategy ranks the conventional NATO offensive as the lowest priority in terms of its likelihood and effectiveness. (U.K. Ministry of Defence, 2010). The United Kingdom is in a better position than other major European powers because it does not rely on Russian gas and has no significant trade agreements.

Regional response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine

China's position on the Ukraine crisis is concentrated in several interests. China is constantly committed to friendly relations with Russia, largely because of economic interests and common views on the world order. Second, China does not want to worsen relations with the United States and Europe in order to maintain its continued economic development. Beijing is committed to the principles that have long been the basis of its foreign policy, and that is the importance of protecting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all states. Russia's recognition of the independence of Donetsk and Luhansk is potentially a parallel to US support for Taiwan, which Beijing claims is part of China.

Since the beginning of the Russian invasion, China has officially taken a position of neutrality, but in fact, in accordance with the policies undertaken towards Moscow, it gives the impression of affection and support. At the UN, Beijing refrained from vetoing a Security Council resolution calling on Russia to withdraw from Ukraine. At the same time, Beijing gives significant moral and political support to Moscow by accepting the Russian narrative that its actions are the result of legitimate security concerns posed by NATO enlargement to the east, as well as violations of international law, but only within the borders which previously was violated by the United States. It is obvious that China is following the Ukrainian crisis through the lens of their confrontation with the United States, so it is not uncommon for the issue of Taiwan's status to appear in the rhetoric against the United States. China prefers to call on the conflicting parties to resolve the dispute through diplomatic negotiations. In other words, Beijing is trying not to be too exposed to criticism from the West, and at the same time to use every possible situation to its advantage. China is not taking part in the sanctions imposed by the West on Moscow. China has even improved its trade and financial ties with Moscow, and issues of conflict between the two countries are not on the agenda at all.

India abstained from voting on the UN General Assembly resolution. When Russia invaded Ukraine, India immediately found itself in the spotlight as a friend of Moscow and a country that traditionally wants to present itself as the world's largest democracy. The United States and European countries have been pushing for India not to side with Moscow, and the Ukrainian ambassador to New Delhi has asked India to end its political support for Russia. India has chosen to be neutral but with an obvious affection for Russia. He has repeatedly abstained from voting on sanctions and condemning Russia's attack. (The Hindu, 2022) India and Russia share a Cold War-based strategic partnership on military-technical cooperation, which has resulted in more than 60 percent of India's weapons and defence systems being of Russian origin. (Cameron, 2009) In 2018, New Delhi signed a \$ 5.43 billion deal with Moscow to purchase the S-400 missile system. India skilfully balances relations with major powers such as the United States, China and Russia. It is a member of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization led by China and Russia. It also has trilateral relations with

the United States and Japan and with Russia and China. India is not worried about the diplomatic challenges surrounding the Russian invasion, and its focus has been on evacuating 20,000 Indian students. However, India will not be able to ignore the strategic challenges and consequences that the war in Ukraine will bring. These include the negative economic consequences of sanctions on Russia and the potential for further deepening of relations between Russia and China.

Turkey voted in favour of the General Assembly resolution, as the conflict in Ukraine is still a major problem for Turkey, threatening not only to damage Ankara's relations with Moscow, but also to damage the Turkish economy by increasing energy costs and preventing Russian and Ukrainian tourists to visit Turkey. It is estimated that the decline in tourism could mean up to \$ 6 billion in lost revenue for Turkey. Turkey has expressed strong support for Ukraine's sovereignty and territorial integrity, but has also sought to minimize tensions with Russia and abstained from voting on Russia's suspension from the Council of Europe on February 25, 2022. On March 1, 2022, Turkey announced that it would not impose sanctions on Russia, protecting its own "national interests" by playing the role of an actor who could negotiate with Russia. Turkey has sought to limit the risks of escalation by banning NATO and Russian warships from crossing the Bosphorus and allowing a balanced approach to the conflict.

Geopolitical awakening of Europe

In response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the EU has adopted a whole package of measures, including severe economic sanctions and the activation of the European Fund for Arming Ukraine with weapons. The Russian invasion of Ukraine sparked a geopolitical awakening in Europe. The war will permanently reshape Europe's security architecture, and the EU will take all measures to regain control of its political, strategic and energy future. The Versailles Summit, held in March this year, focused on European energy independence and European defence. Russia's invasion of Ukraine has forced the EU to address interrelated security and economic challenges, using a combination of geopolitical and geo-economics tools. In a short time, the EU adopted a package of measures and severe sanctions, with consequences that will be felt in all member states of the union, but the goal is the collapse of the Russian economy. The sanctions target technology transfers, Russian banks and Russian accounts, and Russia has faced unprecedented isolation because it was the toughest package of sanctions the Union has ever imposed. Sanctions followed, including restricting Russia from trading in dollars, euros, pounds and yen as part of the global economy and halting its ability to finance and advance the Russian military and sanctioning Russia's second-largest bank. The foreign ministers of the Baltic States have demanded that Russia be cut off from SWIFT, the global intermediary for banks' financial transactions. Shortly afterwards, it was announced that major Russian banks would be removed from SWIFT,

but with limited accessibility to ensure continued ability to pay for gas shipments. The United States has imposed export controls, a new sanction focused on restricting Russian access to high-tech components, hardware and software made with any US parts or intellectual property. On February 27, 2022, the EU announced that it was closing its airspace to Russian airlines. The sanctions trend will intensify in the coming period as a number of European gas and oil companies - including BP, Shell and Equinor - withdraw their Russian investments, hitting the Kremlin where it can be most affected: its energy sector. With these geopolitical measures, the EU indicates that it is ready to pay the high price of energy.

On February 28, 2022, in response to the Russian invasion, the EU approved new measures that included a ban on transactions with the Russian central bank and a € 500 million support package for financing, equipment and supplies for the Ukrainian Armed Forces. The EU has approved the suspension of broadcasting activities in the EU by Sputnik and Russia Today until the aggression against Ukraine is stopped and the Russian Federation and its affiliated media cease to carry out disinformation and information manipulation against the EU and its member states.

The Council of the EU has introduced additional restrictive measures regarding the export of goods for maritime navigation and radio communication technology to Russia. The same month was followed by a new package of economic and individual sanctions against Russia, which included a ban on transactions with certain state-owned enterprises, new investments in Russia's energy sector, stricter export restrictions on dual-use goods, and goods and technology that could contribute to technological advancement of the Russian defence and security sector. The EU has also imposed trade restrictions on iron, steel and luxury goods.

Internally, the EU has begun to mitigate challenges that directly affect European countries. Policy makers in Brussels have activated the Temporary Protection Directive, drafted in 2001, which has never been used before. This emergency mechanism provides protection for a large number of Ukrainian refugees, including the right of residence, as well as access to the labour market, medical care and education. To directly support the people of Ukraine, the EU has also announced an important package of humanitarian and financial assistance.

By launching the European Peace Fund (an initiative declared operational in July 2021 to fill the financial gaps in the EU Common Security and Defence Policy and the bilateral support of partner countries in the field of defence) the EU is trying to set itself up as a key security actor in this new geopolitical environment. This instrument will provide 500 million euros to equip Ukraine with weapons. The most dramatic turn in its defence policy was made by Germany, with the announcement of a special fund of 100 billion euros for defence spending in the next four years and a constant commitment to more than two percent of annual defence spending. In addition, Germany and Sweden have an-

nounced they will increase defence spending, while Romania and Latvia aim to increase defence spending to 2.5 per cent of their GDP. Poland also announced plans to increase defence spending to 3% by 2023. Denmark will significantly increase its defence budget and try to become independent of Russian natural gas in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine and gradually increase its defence spending to 2% of GDP by 2033, which is equivalent to an increase at an annual defence cost of about \$ 2.65 billion.

This whole new geopolitical game is a policy of restoring the EU to power and challenging these efforts to remain sustainable. Increasing defence spending by certain EU member states is an important starting point, but these efforts must be translated into EU-wide coordination. The coordinated use of the European Defence Fund and the European defence financing borrowing program, similar to efforts to mitigate the effects of the pandemic, should enable the EU to step up its defence against conventional and hybrid threats. In the event of destabilization of the Baltic States or northern member states by Russia, strengthening resilience is a key condition for building capacity to meet future challenges.

However, in order to become a geopolitical actor, the EU needs to put in place the already established security structure, i.e. Article 44 of the Treaty on European Union, through which the EU delegates the security task to a group of countries that want and can act in the field of security and defence. To that end, NATO and Partner countries need to find support in EU combat groups, multinational military rapid reaction units created in 2003, units that have never been used before. For all this to be sustainable, the EU needs to change its policy towards the Balkan countries. EU accession talks with these countries have stalled, prompting them to seek non-EU partnerships, especially with China, Turkey and Russia. Other non-EU countries (such as Moldova and Georgia, for example) fear becoming victims of Russian aggression, as well as economic turmoil.

Certainly the war in Ukraine will force the EU to diversify its energy sources, and policymakers will need to prepare the population for higher energy prices and serious inflation before they feel the effects of sanctions. Sustainable political will is needed to strengthen Europe's defence, and for the EU's defence efforts to be sustainable. Following the developments in Ukraine, certain EU members have taken a much more realistic approach to consulting with Eastern European partners and expressed readiness for long-term changes to their role in European defence. The care of a large number of refugees by Eastern European member states indicates a change in the previous treatment of migrants from the Syrian civil war. The EU is aware that it must not tolerate a lack of coordination, and even countries that have traditionally been cautious about defence co-operation through the EU are already reconsidering their position. Provided EU member states agree on huge investments in EU defence, coordination of interconnection efforts will follow, while ensuring compatibility with NATO. On these issues, European countries still do not show the necessary de-

gree of coordination. The Military Mobility Project, called “Permanent Structured Cooperation on Security and Defence of the EU (PESCO)”, is defined as a strategic platform that will seamlessly ensure the rapid deployment of military personnel and equipment across the EU by rail, land, air or sea.

Many questions remain open regarding the coordination policy of the Union’s member states.

Conclusion

The Russian invasion is a serious violation of international law and a serious threat to European and global security. The Ukraine conflict will have lasting consequences for the global security architecture, it has a strong impact on global inflation, global poverty, global food and raw material shortages. But it will certainly have lasting consequences for the European continent. The member states of the European Union have always been guided by their national interests in relation to Russia. While some, such as Poland, saw Russia as a potential threat, others, such as Germany and Hungary, saw Russia as a partner. Still others, who have not built any trade ties with Russia, such as Spain, have not even delved into the question of building a foreign policy towards Russia. The culmination of the Union’s inconsistent policies towards Russia came at the end of 2021. Although Russia has been piling up troops along the border with Ukraine, and has repeatedly stated that the Union, as the guarantor of the Minsk agreements, has done nothing to implement them, European leaders have not taken the threat seriously as Moscow’s rhetoric interpreted as a bluff. The inconsistency of the policies of the EU member states also dominates after the launch of Russia’s special operation in Ukraine. While some advocate and adhere to the toughest sanctions, others pursue their own policies based on the protection of their national interests and continue to trade with Russia, especially in the energy sector. But despite all the disagreements, the Union manages to somehow dampen the demands of the states and build unequal policies depending on whether the states have access to the sea or not or depending on how energy dependent they are on Russia.

The most worrying issue for the security of the Union is certainly not inflation, refugees or the lack of energy, raw materials and food. The question to which Europeans have no answer is how to build an adequate security structure that can counter a nuclear power like Russia without risking a nuclear war. European diplomacy is strong on paper, but the European bureaucracy is difficult to achieve what has been agreed.

Union diplomacy has failed. The conflict was not resolved through dialogue and cooperation, but escalated into a military conflict from which, in the end, the biggest loser will certainly be Ukraine. It is increasingly likely that Russia will emerge victorious from the conquered territories, but the price it will pay will take Russia back to the 1980s. For the sake of truth, the European continent will suffer huge consequences, the rehabilitation of which will take

years even after the end of the conflict. The distrust of the EU-Russia relationship will need time to soften, during which time the market will find new avenues, so the economies of European countries and the Russian Federation will probably not be seen in our lifetime developed at the level before the Ukrainian conflict.

Globally, China, India as a country with a population of over 2 billion people will have a major impact on future global security challenges, while small and medium-sized countries in the Middle East, Asia and Africa will try to build their own independent policies approaching the side where they have a greater interest, while forgetting about traditional ties.

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