

#SUPPORTUKRAINE

THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

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The U.S. Response to War on Ukraine Needs Work

Dear Readers,



I present to you the second edition of The Warsaw Institute Review quarterly in 2022. The new issue of our magazine, however, deals with the well-known military subject, which has been terrifyingly shaping the reality of the people of Ukraine for over a hundred days. The war triggered by the Russian Federation is once again the main topic of The Warsaw Institute Review, but it will not be the only issue raised by our experts.

In the latest issue you will see the effects of the intense cooperation that we have managed to establish with experts from the Heritage Foundation. The article of the issue is the analysis of their authorship, in which the United States' response to the war in Ukraine was developed. This war, however, is not an exclusive field of action for the Joe Biden administration, and its effects also affect many other socio-economic areas of the countries involved in the conflict. One of the branches of the economy that has felt the situation beyond the eastern border of Poland is tourism.

The Free World response to Putin's criminal attack on Ukraine was also the subject of a very interesting conversation with Michael Werbowski. In a short interview, an expert from the Warsaw Institute presented to me Canada's perspective on the activities currently taking place in eastern Ukraine.

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The latest issue of The Warsaw Institute Review will also include topics related to other issues that are key to geopolitical decisions in the world. We are talking about the situation in the Indo-Pacific and the reaction of the Joe Biden administration to China's progressive territorial aspirations in this region.

As part of the thematic diversity of our magazine, you can also read about the elections in Hungary or the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on democratic countries.

I wish you a good read!



JAN HERNIK
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
THE WARSAW INSTITUTE REVIEW

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THE U.S. RESPONSE TO WAR ON UKRAINE NEEDS WORK

ALEXIS MRACHEK AND DR. PETER BROOKES

Since Russia launched its most recent invasion of Ukraine on February 24, the United States and NATO have provided political, military, economic, and other forms of aid and support to Ukraine. While well-intentioned, Washington could improve the types, quantity, and velocity of the aid it provides to Kyiv.

Kyiv's ability to defeat Moscow's unjust invasion is critical to defending Ukraine's territorial integrity and sovereignty, but also to returning stability to Eastern Europe, protecting the countries of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), and re-establishing deterrence against Russian nationalist ambitions fomented by Russian President Vladimir Putin.

On the diplomatic front, the United States initiated several calls and meetings with Russian officials before the second invasion, but none were fruitful.¹ One significant meeting was the Biden-Putin Summit in June 2021 where President Joe Biden met with Russian President Vladimir Putin in Geneva to discuss a number of issues, including human rights, Ukraine, and cyberattacks.

President Biden asserted at the summit that the United States has an “unwavering commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine.”² This was

¹ The first invasion was the Russian seizure of Crimea in 2014.

² “Remarks by President Biden in Press Conference,” The White House, June 16, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/speeches->



© SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

an important statement to make given Russia's military buildup, which began in April 2021, the Russo-Ukrainian war that started in the Donbas region in 2014, and the ongoing illegal Russian occupation of Crimea. In the end, the diplomatic rhetoric was not enough to prevent Russia's second invasion of Ukraine.

President Biden and Putin described the overall meeting as friendly and constructive, but they did not agree upon anything of substance.³ Other significant meetings occurred in January 2022 among the United States, NATO, and Russia. At the bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue

remarks/2021/06/16/remarks-by-president-biden-in-press-conference-4/ (accessed April 25, 2022).

³ Alexis Mrachek and Luke Coffey, "Biden-Putin Summit Proves Essentially Fruitless," *The Daily Signal*, June 17, 2021, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2021/06/17/biden-putin-summit-was-essentially-fruitless> (accessed April 25, 2022).

(SSD) between the U.S. and Russia, the United States urged Russia to de-escalate the situation along the Russian-Ukrainian border, but Russia continued to claim that it had no intentions of attacking or further invading Ukraine and said the West should not fear "any kind of escalation."⁴

A month before the January SSD meeting, Russia demanded security guarantees such as NATO retracting its offer of membership to Ukraine and the cessation of all U.S. and allied military activity in Eastern Europe and Central Asia,⁵ but the

⁴ Michael Gordon, William Mauldin, and Ann Simmons, "U.S., Russia Talks Yield Little Overall Progress Amid Ukraine Crisis," *The Wall Street Journal*, January 10, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-russia-talks-begin-to-avert-one-of-the-biggest-geopolitical-crises-since-the-cold-war-11641815752> (accessed April 25, 2022).

⁵ Andrew Kramer and Steven Erlanger, "Russia Lays Out Demands for a Sweeping new Security Deal with NATO," *The New York Times*, December 17, 2021, <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/12/17/world/europe/>

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U.S. wisely did not capitulate. Rather, the United States made clear at the SSD that there would be significant consequences for Moscow “well beyond” what it faced in 2014.⁶

In the NATO-Russia Council meeting in January, NATO allies insisted Russia “respect the territorial integrity of its neighbors,”⁷ and reaffirmed that the alliance would not accept Russian demands to uninvite Ukraine into NATO.⁸ NATO also even offered Russia a series of further meetings to discuss wider issues, but the Russian delegation demurred.

NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg, following the meeting, reported that “significant differences remained” between NATO and Russia.⁹ Besides these meetings, multiple calls were held between President Biden and Putin.¹⁰ It is positive

[russia-nato-security-deal.html?action=click&module=RelatedLinks&pgtype=Article](#) (accessed April 25, 2022).

⁶ Special briefing, “Briefing with Deputy Secretary Wendy R. Sherman on the U.S.–Russia Strategic Stability Dialogue,” U.S. Department of State, January 10, 2022, <https://www.state.gov/briefing-with-deputy-secretary-wendy-r-sherman-on-the-u-s-russia-strategic-stability-dialogue/> (accessed April 25, 2022).

⁷ “Deep Divides Remain After Russia-NATO Talks on Ukraine Crisis,” *The New York Times*, January 12, 2022, https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/01/12/world/russia-ukraine-nato-us/campaign_id=9&emc=edit_nn_20220112&instance_id=50066&nl=the-morning®_id=86756322&segment_id=79432&te=1&user_id=04295b603fd7aeed67ea9c7825321129 (accessed April 25, 2022).

⁸ *Ibid.*

⁹ *Ibid.*

¹⁰ E.g., Statement, “Readout of President Joseph R. Biden, Jr. Call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia,” The White House, July 9, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/07/09/readout-of-president-joseph-r-biden-jr-call-with-president-vladimir-putin-of-russia-2/> (accessed April 25, 2022); Statement, “Readout of President Biden’s Video Call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia,” The White House, December 7, 2021, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2021/12/07/readout-of-president-bidens-video-call-with-president-vladimir-putin-of-russia/> (accessed April

that the U.S. and NATO sought to utilize diplomacy in their approach towards Russia to try to prevent a second invasion of Ukraine, but the fact is that from Russia’s perspective, the calls and meetings simply served as a means to buy time to decide its actions and build up its invasion forces.¹¹

Now, it is evident that Moscow crafted a multitude of contrived reasons for invading Ukraine, such as to “de-Nazify” the country or to “liberate” its population from nationalists. Diplomacy should always be attempted, but clearly its use as a tool, lacks proven success dealing with a Russia under Vladimir Putin’s control.

In the end, the American and NATO diplomatic effort failed to prevent a Russian invasion of Ukraine in February 2022. The West, in some cases, has been challenged in garnering support against the Russian invasion, including at the United Nations and among a number of major influential countries, most prominently with China and India.

In contrast, the United States and its allies and partners seemingly have done well in the information space regarding Ukraine. In the weeks leading up to February 24, the U.S. consistently informed Ukraine, according to its intelligence agencies, that a second Russian invasion looked imminent. On January 14, 2022, U.S. intelligence

25, 2022); and Statement, “Readout of President Biden’s Call with President Vladimir Putin of Russia,” The White House, February 12, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/02/12/readout-of-president-bidens-call-with-president-vladimir-putin-of-russia/> (accessed April 25, 2022).

¹¹ Alexis Mrachek, “Talks Over Russia-Ukraine Conflict Yield Little Fruit, but West Must Stand Firm,” *The Daily Signal*, January 19, 2022, <https://www.dailysignal.com/2022/01/19/talks-over-russia-ukraine-conflict-yield-little-fruit-but-west-must-stand-firm> (accessed April 25, 2022).



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revealed that Russia could invade within the next month.¹²

On February 18, President Biden, citing U.S. intelligence, reported that Moscow would target Kyiv within the coming week.¹³ In hindsight, these were extremely accurate assessments, only a mere few days off. Now more than two months into Russia's war in Ukraine, the United States and others reportedly continues to provide useful intelligence to Ukraine.

In the first half of April, the Biden administration disclosed it was moving to "significantly expand the intelligence it is providing to Ukraine's forces" so that they can better target Russia's forces in the Donbas region and Crimea.¹⁴ While

¹² Christina Wilkie and Amanda Macias, "U.S. Intelligence Agencies Point to Potential Russian Invasion of Ukraine Within a Month's Time," *CNBC*, January 14, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/01/14/russia-could-invade-ukraine-within-next-month-us-intelligence.html> (accessed April 25, 2022).

¹³ "Citing U.S. Intelligence, Biden Says Putin Has Decided to Invade Ukraine," *The New York Times*, February 18, 2022, <https://www.nytimes.com/live/2022/02/18/world/russia-ukraine-biden-putin> (accessed April 25, 2022).

¹⁴ Michael Gordon, Warren Strobel, and Vivian

it is unclear which types of intelligence has been, and is being, provided, it is reasonable to suggest that Western intelligence may have made a difference in the largely unexpected success of the Ukrainian campaign so far.

The United States also has done well in exposing possible Russian "false flag" operations, once again likely derived from intelligence, especially those revealing the potential use of chemical weapons, arguably deterring the use of this weapon of mass destruction against the Ukrainian military or civilian population.

On the military front, the Biden administration and NATO have been well-intentioned, but could improve vastly their support to Ukrainian forces. On the positive side, the U.S. has provided a large amount of weaponry and equipment to Ukraine over the course of the war,

Salama, "Biden Administration to Provide Ukraine With More Intelligence, Heavier Weapons to Fight Russia," *The Wall Street Journal*, April 13, 2022, <https://www.wsj.com/articles/u-s-expands-flow-of-intelligence-to-ukraine-as-white-house-sends-more-arms-11649868029> (accessed April 25, 2022).



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totaling \$3.4 billion USD so far.¹⁵ NATO has done so as well.

The weaponry and non-lethal equipment provided so far includes Javelin anti-tank missiles, Stinger anti-aircraft missiles, the Switchblade tactical unmanned aerial systems, as well as body armor and helmets, commercial satellite imagery services, ammunition, and medical supplies, amongst many other items.¹⁶

These weapons were seemingly crucial in the first phase of the war, including

¹⁵ Amanda Macias, “Ghost Drones, Helicopters and Howitzers: Here’s a Look at the Weapons the U.S. is Sending Ukraine,” *CNBC*, April 22, 2022, <https://www.cnbc.com/2022/04/22/roundup-of-us-weapons-for-ukraine.html> (accessed April 26, 2022).

¹⁶ Release, “Fact Sheet: U.S. Security Assistance to Ukraine,” U.S. Department of Defense, April 7, 2022, <https://www.defense.gov/News/Releases/Release/Article/2992414/fact-sheet-us-security-assistance-to-ukraine/> (accessed April 25, 2022).

blunting the Russian effort to take Kyiv. But these systems may not play as strong a role in the second phase of the war, which seems to be focusing on the South and East of Ukraine, where the topography is markedly different. Ukrainian commanders are pleading for weapons to counter Putin’s assault in the East and South that will likely feature the use of more Russian heavy artillery and armor.

As a result, the United States and NATO must move immediately into a “more, better, faster” mode in supporting the Ukrainian forces. It has, unfortunately, been slow to do so—squandering a possible window of opportunity to bolster Ukrainian defenses while Russian forces recovered and regrouped from its failed campaign in the North.

For instance, the United States is just now providing howitzer long-range artillery

and counter-battery radars as well as the necessary training to use it.¹⁷ Heavy weaponry from the West should have been provided much earlier in the conflict—if not before the invasion—not only for defense of Ukrainian territory, but as a way to drive diplomacy and as a possible deterrent to the beginning of a second phase of the war.

In addition, the failure to transfer the Polish MiG-29 fighters to Ukraine earlier in the war,¹⁸ either through NATO or directly was a major mistake. It made NATO look feeble and the support of Kyiv look weak in Moscow's eyes. A continued failure to transfer the necessary usable, high-technology, light and heavy systems to the Ukrainian forces quickly could significantly impact the outcome of the war in the East and South—and the fate of Ukraine itself.

Economically, the U.S. and NATO have been mostly strong, but they could have done more before February 24 in an effort to deter Russia from invading Ukraine. Now, the U.S. and many of its NATO allies have imposed strong sanctions on Russia, but punitive economic sanctions can take time to have an effect and, as such, many of these sanctions should have been imposed sometime last year when Russia was already increasing its troops on Ukraine's border.

Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, in fact, believed the same. On February 19, he was severely critical

of allied leaders for waiting to impose sanctions until after a Russian invasion, accusing world leaders of “appeasement.”¹⁹ He did not understand why the U.S. and NATO were waiting to impose sanctions, even though Western intelligence already was showing that Russian forces would invade Ukraine.

Once Russia did invade, however, the West, in addition to Japan, South Korea, and Singapore, swiftly imposed harsh economic sanctions, which have had a devastating effect on the Russian economy. The United States sanctioned Sberbank, Alfa Bank, critical major Russian state-owned enterprises, Russian elites and their family members, Vladimir Putin, and Sergei Lavrov, the Foreign Minister. The U.S., in conjunction with Canada, the EU, and the United Kingdom, also cut off Russian banks' access to the SWIFT international messaging system²⁰ in addition to imposing several other punitive sanctions. Many NATO allies sanctioned the same persons and entities. It is estimated that Russia's GDP will have up to a 15 percent downturn this year.²¹

In addition, 750 companies, many of which are American or NATO-ally based, have curtailed their operations in Russia since February 24.²² Hundreds of other

¹⁹ Ed Pilkington, “US Intelligence Believes Russia has Ordered Ukraine Invasion – Reports,” *The Guardian*, February 20, 2022, <https://www.theguardian.com/us-news/2022/feb/20/russia-invasion-ukraine-biden-blinken-us-national-security-council> (accessed April 27, 2022).

²⁰ Julia Zorthian, “Here's What the New, Tightened SWIFT Sanctions on Russian Banks Actually Do,” *TIME*, March 2, 2022, <https://time.com/6153951/swift-sanctions-russia/> (accessed April 28, 2022).

²¹ Statement, “FACT SHEET: United States, G7 and EU Impose Severe and Immediate Costs on Russia,” The White House, April 6, 2022, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/04/06/fact-sheet-united-states-g7-and-eu-impose-severe-and-immediate-costs-on-russia/> (accessed April 27, 2022).

²² “Over 750 Companies Have Curtailed Operations in Russia—But Some Remain,” Yale School of

¹⁷ Olivier Knox, “More Arms, New Training for Ukraine: U.S. Gambles on Russia's ‘Empty Threats,’” *The Washington Post*, April 20, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/04/20/more-arms-new-training-ukraine-us-gambles-russias-empty-threats/> (accessed April 26, 2022).

¹⁸ Amber Phillips and Miriam Berger, “Why Washington Shut Down Poland's Offer to Give Ukraine Fighter Jets,” *The Washington Post*, March 9, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/politics/2022/03/09/ukraine-poland-mig-29-fighter-jets/> (accessed April 27, 2022).



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companies are in the process of retracting from Russia; some are temporarily halting their operations, some have reduced their current operations, some have merely held off on new Russian investments, whereas others have defied demands for exiting the Russian market.

In order to have the most significant impact on the Russian economy, as punishment for Moscow's illegal invasion of Ukraine and disregard for Ukraine's territorial sovereignty and integrity, U.S. and NATO ally-based companies should not waver in halting their operations in Russia for the foreseeable future. Companies that have not retracted from Russia should do so immediately.

Supporting any country with the diplomatic, military, economic and other means for it to wage a war against a foreign adversary is a difficult undertaking. Russia's military capabilities, nuclear

Management, April 26, 2022, <https://som.yale.edu/story/2022/over-750-companies-have-curtailed-operations-russia-some-remain> (accessed April 27, 2022).

superpower status, and concerns about the state of mind of the Russian leadership make this all the more difficult for the United States and NATO.

The Western response to Russian aggression so far has, unfortunately, been mixed and must improve significantly in the quantity, quality, and delivery of its diplomatic, economic, military, and intelligence support if Ukraine is to repel the Russian invaders, regaining its territorial integrity and sovereignty, returning stability to the region, and re-establishing deterrence against Russia.

Alexis Mrachek, Dr. Peter Brookes ■
June 2022

Alexis Mrachek is a policy analyst in Russian and Eurasian affairs at The Heritage Foundation, and Dr. Peter Brookes is a Heritage Foundation senior fellow and former deputy assistant secretary of defense.

CANADA'S RESPONSE TO THE WAR IN UKRAINE

JAN HERNIK'S INTERVIEW WITH MICHAEL WERBOWSKI

The war in Ukraine has been going on for over three months. During this time, we witness the historic unification of all Free World states against Russian aggression. One of the largest Ukrainian diasporas in the West is Canada, which has also been actively involved in helping the people attacked by Vladimir Putin's regime. The editor-in-chief of The Warsaw Institute Review, Jan Hernik, talked about Canada's response to the war in Ukraine with Michael Werbowski, an expert in international relations, NATO and security.

WE KNOW THE WAR IN UKRAINE HAS BEEN GOING TO FOR ALMOST THREE MONTHS NOW. SINCE THEN UKRAINE HAS RECEIVED ENORMOUS HUMANITARIAN AND DIPLOMATIC HELP FROM THE ENTIRE FREE WORLD – INCLUDING CANADA. FROM THE VERY BEGINNING OF THIS WAR, WHAT WAS THE FIRST REACTION OF THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT TO THIS RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE?

Canada had a very active role even before the conflict. That is because there are many Ukrainians or Canadians with Ukrainian origins who have a very powerful influence on domestic policies towards Ukraine. We can say that 1.5 millions Canadian-Ukrainians were monitoring what was going on in Ukraine since the country broke of from the Soviet Union.

Now as far as the current conflict and the Russian invasion is going on, the Ukrainian-Canadian lobby immediately kicked in - if I may say - a very positive and powerful influence over Ottawa. But not directly, as we know that Canada cannot intervene in a conflict directly because Ukraine is not a member of NATO but the Canadian armed forces have been training Ukrainian forces in the western part of Ukraine for several years.

That training enabled Ukraine to be better prepared for the Russian aggression. As for the domestic politics, the Liberal government really needs the support from the Ukrainian Canadians. The government assisted with as much military help as they could, it has mobilised the Canadian public, there was an enormous humanitarian aid. Many Canadian cities took Ukraine refugees.

The media here is very actively following the situation. The domestic support for the Ukrainian population is really quite astounding.

What will it bring in case of concrete results? That's another question. Canada's role is significant but Canada is literally following the lead of the United States. Canada cannot act on its own. Canada must act in accordance with what Washington is formulating. And if the United States engages in a dialogue with the Russians, Canada unfortunately will have a minimal role what kind of agreement will be made in order to stabilize the situation. So also on the diplomatic stage one should not overestimate Canada's role in that perspective.

IN THE END OF APRIL, CANADA'S MINISTER OF DEFENCE TOOK PART IN A MEETING IN RAMSTEIN AIRBASE, WHICH WAS DEVOTED TO THE ARMAMENT AIDS TO UKRAINE. AS YOU SAID IT IS THE UNITED STATES WHO PLAY THE MAIN ROLE AS THE LEADER OF THE FREE WORLD. BUT IF CANADA'S REACTION TO THE WAR WILL INCREASE THE POSITION OF THIS COUNTRY IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA, DO YOU FEEL THAT MIGHT BE A GOOD CHANCE TO SHOW THAT CANADA ALSO PLAYS ITS ROLE?

In a historical context, during the Cold war Canada played the intermediary role between the US and the Soviet Union. Canada skated between the two superpowers. It positioned itself as a mediator. Today Canada's role is more as of a secondary role or a secondary confidant in NATO: They are actively engaged in the Baltic, they have divisions there, which sends a signal to Moscow: There is a Canadian presence on the ground. It is a kind of a triggering mechanism. Several hundreds or possibly thousands of troops are there on the terrain. But it is the more bigger NATO countries that play the most important role.



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To return to your original question about the meeting in Ramstein, Canada really is there as a backup. The big heavy lifting is obviously done by the Germans, the Poles perhaps, the Americans. I am sure Canada is fulfilling a logistical and technical role but I don't think it has the capacity to take the initiative as to how to assist Ukraine in its military campaign.

Again Canada is there. But I think in the closed door meetings, Canada hasn't the capacity to present initiatives. It is the Americans and the Europeans who are organising the support for Ukraine.

WE SEE QUITE EXCEPTIONAL UNITY IN THE WEST. AND ALSO WE SEE UNITY AND COORDINATION IN THE LINE OTTAWA-WASHINGTON. HOW DO YOU EVALUATE THIS COOPERATION? AND COULD THE WEST'S REACTION HAD BEEN DIFFERENT WHEN DONALD TRUMP WAS ELECTED PRESIDENT?

It's a very tough question. From what I am reading from other experts is that if we had a Trump presidency there might have not been the war in Ukraine. Already at the beginning, Canada had a very

fractious and uneasy relationship with the Trump administration. Would it had to follow Washington's path? The Trump administration would have maybe done things differently.

Today we know the Russians have gained territory in Ukraine and the Ukrainians are resisting. Coming back to your first question, I would say it is really the Canadian government, that is taking the cues from Washington.

The Liberal government is really keen on showing it is absolutely committed to the territorial integrity of Ukraine. Whether it is a Biden or a Trump administration, Canada has to insist on that Crimea was annexed by Russia. In that aspect it doesn't change much. But of course Biden and Trudeau would consult on a regular basis and Trudeau has clearly reiterated what Biden has said: That Putin's aggression must be stopped. Had the Trump administration won, then it would be a very different story. Because Trump and Trudeau never got along and the Trump administration had better channels of communication with the Kremlin than Biden.



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THE CANADIAN HOUSE OF COMMONS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED FOR RECOGNIZING THE RUSSIAN AGGRESSION AS A GENOCIDE. CANADA IS INVOLVED IN DOCUMENTING THESE CRIMES IN UKRAINE THAT HAPPEN ON A DAILY BASIS. HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE CHANCES TO BRING PUTIN TO JUSTICE AFTER THIS WAR?

If one is an optimist one would hope, that Canada is bringing documented proof of these crimes to court in the Hague. Canada has been at the forefront of promoting the war crimes tribunal during the Balkans conflict and Canada plays a very positive in the Hague and the ICC.

That in itself is fine. But the problem is that the main players don't recognize the International Criminal Court – neither the United States nor Russia. So Canada was instrumental in establishing the ICC. And Canada will continue to do the impossible, to have prosecutorial power implemented and the Parliament has clearly denounced the Russians in Ukraine. However, without being a legal expert, Canada can translate this into actual prosecution as it was the case with the conflict in Yugoslavia: That remains to be seen. Right now the main occupation of Canada is to resolve the refugee crisis. There is a tremendous strain

on Poland. I do believe that it is doing its utmost to elevate the pressure from Poland concerning amount of Ukrainian refugees.

HOW MANY REFUGEES WOULD CANADA ACCEPT? FOR EXAMPLE, WHILE BEING IN WARSAW JOE BIDEN SAID HE WILL TAKE ABOUT 100.000 UKRAINIAN REFUGEES. DID THE CANADIAN GOVERNMENT SAY ANYTHING ABOUT THE NUMBERS?

Looking to the interesting aspect that the United States gave a specific figure of 100.000, Canada has so far been reluctant to put a number on how many refugees will come. But the immigration ministry alludes to the fact that the number could be unlimited. And they have ordered flights to Poland to accommodate the Ukrainians to fly to Canada. On a logistical Canada is doing its utmost. Considering the fact that Canada is a much smaller country, it doesn't have the same financial means to bring in so many refugees than the US. But in the long term Canada will take more Ukrainians.

There is a generous amount of money to support them. These Ukrainians are highly educated but of course there is the linguistic difficulty of learning English and especially French. So they are in a



© SOURCE: FLICKR

limbo before they find employment and that is what the government is aware of when inviting a large amount of Ukrainians.

THE LAST QUESTION IS YOUR ASSESSMENT ABOUT THE FUTURE OF THE WAR IN UKRAINE. WHEN WILL IT END? WILL THE WEST BE ABLE TO MAINTAIN THIS UNITY WE ARE OBSERVING FOR THE LAST THREE MONTHS?

I would say the best-case scenario for the Kremlin is to secure a buffer-zone between the two republics along the Black Sea coast. Once that corridor is secured, occupied or annexed, the Kremlin will be satisfied with that. If that's not the crystal-ball solution, then in the worst-case scenario more tragic might happen. Ukraine might be partitioned: Something like a post-war Germany that is divided between NATO and Russia. Of course it was tragic. But looking to the European history it is not an impossible scenario.

As far as Poland is concerned, I think that the government will take military and diplomatic measures to secure Ukraine's eastern border or what could be a rump-state, which would be west of the Dniepr or western Ukraine with its capital Lviv.

And on the NATO side we have just seen extraordinary relief. Everybody was about to pop the champagne corks: Sweden and Finland had almost done a deal to join NATO. Then suddenly my favourite man, Mr Erdogan steps in and throws a rock into the machinery. Right now we don't know whether Turkey will accept the expansion of NATO to Scandinavia.

I now that some citizens in Scandinavia have mixed feelings about the accession. But the governments decided so. Regarding Turkey, if they block the expansion, there might be a crisis in the alliance we have never seen before. What are the Americans to do? Are they going to put pressure on Ankara? Right now, my reading of the situation is that Erdogan is in a very powerful position. There are American bases such as Incirlik in Turkey's south. If the Americans push too hard, Turkey might threaten to close the American bases. This would be catastrophic for NATO and play in the hands of the Kremlin.

It is a very strategic step for NATO to expand in the north. So what Turkey does is very important and one should keep an eye on that.

HOW THE WAR IN UKRAINE AFFECTED TOURISM IN EUROPE

ANNA BIERNACKA-RYGIEL, PH.D.

After the pandemic had halted international travel, many were seeing 2022 as a “breakthrough” year for the hospitality sector. Countries have lifted most of their lockdown restrictions and seen a drop in the number of new infections while much of their population has been fully vaccinated. The tourism industry was awaiting early 2022 to bounce back from pandemic-related losses. In January 2022, European tourism was expected¹ to return to pre-pandemic levels as soon

as in 2023,² but the Russia-Ukraine conflict that broke out in late February has compelled it to downgrade that forecast. The following three tourism-related aspects are discussed below in the context of the Russian invasion of Ukraine:

- inbound tourism to Europe;
- void left by Russian tourists;
- tourism in Central and Eastern European countries.

The above appears to be crucial for the tourism industry. As the war is on in Ukraine, jet fuel prices rose sharply, which will indeed make air travel and package holidays more expensive. The

¹ https://geekweek.interia.pl/raporty/raport-nowy-rok-nowy-swiat/artykuly/news-turystyka-w-2022-roku-ekologiczna-zrownowazona-i-krajowa,nId,5737442#utm_source=paste&utm_medium=paste&utm_campaign=chrome; as of May 15, 2022, 9:15 AM

² <https://www.nocowanie.pl/trendy-turystyczne-w-2022-roku--jak-bedliemy-wypoczywac-i-gdzie-podrozowac.html>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:20 AM



© SOURCE: FLICKR

closure of Ukrainian and Russian airspace for civilian flights caused uneconomic and polluting rerouted flights.

INBOUND TOURISM TO EUROPE

The war³ has stopped many tourists from traveling. The further away an event occurs from one's home country, the more it acts as a deterrent,⁴ perhaps due to ambiguous media coverage or the fact that some tourists are not at all familiar with some parts of the world. European destinations are now affected as many tourists will stay away from a war-torn

³ <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9 AM

⁴ "The further away the 'hazard' is, the larger the space that people consider 'dangerous,'" according to Professor Schumde. <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:45 AM

continent, according to the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO).⁵

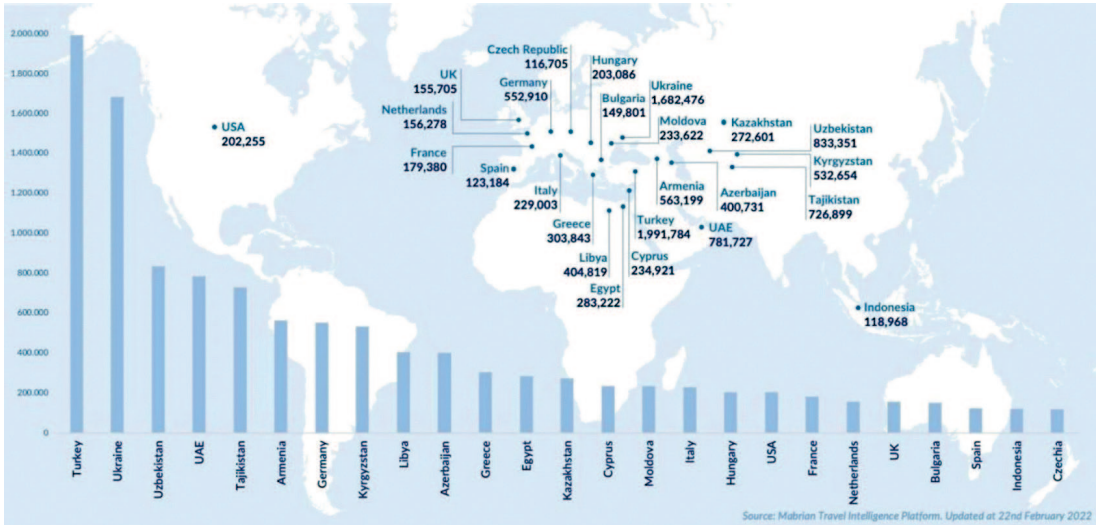
Many countries once popular with tourists have all but disappeared from the tourist map over the years because of repeated hazards. Tunisia, Egypt, Sri Lanka, Iraq, Syria, Myanmar, Afghanistan, and Mexico all suffered from the fact that war and terror deterred tourists.

European nations need a coherent marketing strategy outside their mother continent, which is a task for the European Travel Commission.⁶

⁵ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/2160353,1,turystyka-czasu-wojny-komurosyjska-inwazja-zepsuje-wakacje.read>; as of May 15, 2022, 10:35 AM

⁶ <https://etc-corporate.org/>; as of May 15, 2022, 11:20 AM

RUSSIAN INVASION OF UKRAINE



OUTFLOW OF RUSSIAN TOURISTS

Outflow of Russian tourists who could not travel amid worldwide sanctions against Russia in response to its invasion of Ukraine hit the tourism industry. Russia is in the top ten countries whose citizens spend their vacations abroad⁷ — a symbol of wealth and high social status.

Russian tourists provided \$14 billion in revenue worldwide and accounted for 3 percent of tourism revenue in 2020.⁸ Countries like Cuba, Indonesia, Thailand, Turkey, Maldives, Seychelles, Sri Lanka, and Cyprus are particularly popular with Russian tourists.⁹ In Cyprus, guests from Russia make up 20 percent of all tourists.¹⁰ In addition to the Mediterranean island, Russian

tourists often visit Italy and Greece.¹¹ Data from Mabrian Technologies, a travel intelligence platform for the tourism industry, shows that for top countries for outbound Russian tourism by flight capacity¹² were Germany (553,000), Greece (304,000), and Cyprus (235,000).¹³

Both fewer Russian tourists and sanctions delivered a blow to the tourism industry. The ban on Russian-based banks from the SWIFT payment system made it harder for travel agencies to pay for accommodation while many tourists lost access to their money. Russian vacationers were stranded overseas, wondering how they

⁷ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/2160353,1,turystyka-czasu-wojny-komurosyjska-inwazja-zepsuje-wakacje.read>; as of May 15, 2022, 10:10 AM

⁸ <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:00 AM

⁹ <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:00 AM

¹⁰ <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:00 AM

¹¹ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/2160353,1,turystyka-czasu-wojny-komurosyjska-inwazja-zepsuje-wakacje.read>; as of May 15, 2022, 10:10 AM

¹² Data was collected on February 22 while the six months from February 24 to August 24, 2022, are being analyzed in this paper. <https://turystyka.rp.pl/nowe-trendy/art35773941-wojna-rosyjsko-ukrainska-jakie-kraje-straca-najwiecej-turystow-z-rosji>; as of May 15, 2022, 11:10 AM

¹³ <https://turystyka.rp.pl/nowe-trendy/art35773941-wojna-rosyjsko-ukrainska-jakie-kraje-straca-najwiecej-turystow-z-rosji>; as of May 15, 2022, 11:10 AM



© SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

can return home after Russia's invasion of Ukraine.¹⁴

Not only Russian but also Ukrainian tourists are expected to avoid many destinations. Ukrainian travelers contributed another \$8.5 billion to tourism in 2019.¹⁵

Interestingly, guests from Russia have to pay double fee to book holidays in some available holiday resorts.¹⁶ What

¹⁴ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/2160353,1,turystyka-czasu-wojny-komurosyjska-inwazja-zepsuje-wakacje.read>; as of May 15, 2022, 10:10 AM

¹⁵ <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:00 AM

¹⁶ The average price for a ten-day all-inclusive holiday in a three-star hotel in Turkey has risen to 1,060 euros (more than PLN 5,000) in March from 616 euros (some 3,000 PLN) in February 2022, according to Russian Travel Digest. <https://stronapodrozy.pl/>

influenced prices in Russian travel agencies was a massive drop in the Russian currency. This might affect the global economy in the long run.

Tourism specialists say it is always advisable for a country not to rely too much on vacationers from a single country, but to address its offer to many nations.¹⁷ A positive example is Cyprus whose efforts strengthened the state's economy against the exodus of Russian tourists.¹⁸ It takes years to

[wujna-na-ukrainie-jak-sytuacja-wplywa-na-rosyjska-turystyce-za-tegoroczne-wakacje-rosjanie-zaplacana-wet-80-procent-wiecej/ar/c7-16119629](https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyka-za-tegoroczne-wakacje-rosjanie-zaplacana-wet-80-procent-wiecej/ar/c7-16119629); as of May 15, 2022, 11:00 AM

¹⁷ <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%BCa-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9:00 AM

¹⁸ Philokypros Roussounides, the director general of the Cyprus Hotel Association, said that thanks to improved cooperation with France, Germany,



© SOURCE: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

develop a marketing strategy for foreign guests while it is challenging to reroute national schemes towards other markets in a hard yet indispensable step.

TOURISM IN CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPEAN COUNTRIES

At first, countries of Central and Eastern Europe did not report any devastating effects of the war on tourism—tourists did not cancel their already made bookings yet they

Poland, Hungary, and other European countries, Cyprus “will be better off in 2022 than in the previous year, despite the absence of guests from Russia and despite higher energy prices.” <https://www.dw.com/pl/bran%C5%B3Ca-turystyczna-odczuwalne-skutki-wojny/a-61516225>; as of May 15, 2022, 9 AM

gradually stopped buying holidays in the region.¹⁹ But some tourists could consider Central and Eastern Europe dangerous, notably those countries that border Ukraine. Russia’s invasion of Ukraine added another obstacle to air transport in Russia and Ukraine whose airspace was shut amid sanctions and safety reasons, respectively. While the

¹⁹ Jochen Szech is president of the Alliance of Independent Travel Entrepreneurs and owner of Go East Reisen, a German travel agency specializing in Eastern European travel. Although he has seen some cancellations, he has noticed few new bookings, even though travel warnings have not been issued for the Baltic countries or Poland. <https://www.dw.com/pl/wojna-w-ukrainie-i-jej-wp%C5%82ywna-podr%C3%B3%C5%BCe-do-polski-i-innych-kraj%C3%B3w-w-regionie/a-61103584>; as of May 15, 2022, 1:45 PM

number of flights has not shrunk, some passengers are fearful of flying in this region.

Jet2holidays, a British air carrier, canceled all flights to Cracow due to safety concerns.²⁰ UK newspapers warned against trips to Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Hungary, Romania, Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia although there were no formal alerts.²¹

As countries neighboring Ukraine are now facing an influx of refugees, potential tourists could react as when migrants fled to Greece and Italy a few years ago. Some non-EU guests could feel intimidated while others might be ashamed to stay in hotels that often serve as reception centers for fleeing Ukrainians. Plus, the popular vacation regions do not share a border with Ukraine.²²

Interestingly, tourism experts say tourism in Central and Eastern Europe has been hampered for years due to the smoldering conflict in Ukraine that could escalate at any moment.²³ It is vital for Visegrad or Three Seas nations to forge cooperation to promote the region in Europe and outside it.

²⁰ <https://stronapodrozy.pl/ukraina-na-wojnie-polska-turystyka-w-kryzysie-konflikt-zbrojny-odstrasza-zagranicznych-turystow-od-polski-cierpia-krakow-i/ar/c7-16107167>; as of May 15, 2022, 2:15 PM

²¹ <https://www.polityka.pl/tygodnikpolityka/rynek/2160353,1,turystyka-czasu-wojny-komurosyjska-inwazja-zepsuje-wakacje.read>; as of May 15, 2022, 10:45 AM

²² <https://www.dw.com/pl/wojna-w-ukrainie-i-jej-wp%C5%82yw-na-podr%C3%B3%C5%BCe-do-polski-i-innych-kraj%C3%B3w-w-regionie/a-61103584>; as of May 15, 2022, 1:45 PM

²³ <https://www.dw.com/pl/wojna-w-ukrainie-i-jej-wp%C5%82yw-na-podr%C3%B3%C5%BCe-do-polski-i-innych-kraj%C3%B3w-w-regionie/a-61103584>; as of May 15, 2022, 1:45 PM

CONCLUSIONS

In a nutshell, the war in Ukraine will affect tourism into the European Union and within its countries. Those countries that will suffer most have a common border with Ukraine. The inflation crisis and a sharp rise in air fares are likely to result in a more than proportionate decrease in outbound tourism. Hoteliers will be ready to fill in the void left by guests from Russia, seeking to negotiate prices with tour operators.

Many countries will struggle to regain tourism revenues.

The UNWTO addresses its member nations and helps them update their tourism marketing strategies. The organization offered some relief schemes to most crisis-stricken countries.

What action could the European Union take? Tourism is likely to become a top priority for the Commission that might allocate some funds to support the industry. The EU could create a post for an EU commissioner for tourism or at least a bureau of tourism within the structure of the European Commission. Perhaps it is worth making tourism policy common for all EU nations, but such a step would require amendments to the bloc's treaties.

Yet it is not completely impossible: EU nations will be somewhat compelled to work together towards a tourism strategy that promotes Europe and help the most affected regions. Countries of the bloc could consolidate some legal aspects by exchanging best practices and forging dynamic cooperation to receive ad hoc support rapidly.

Anna Biernacka-Rygiel ■
June 2022

THE STRUGGLE TO MAINTAIN THE *PAX AMERICANA* IN THE INDO- PACIFIC REGION: JOE BIDEN'S FIRST PRESIDENTIAL VISIT TO ASIA

JAN HERNIK

The President of the United States made an important visit to Asia in late May. The current US administration aims to continue to implement the doctrine of the *Pivot to Asia* initiated during the first administration of Barack Obama. The policy of Joe Biden, vice-president in that administration, is a clear response to the growing threat posed to the countries of the anti-China alliance by Xi Jinping's regime. Biden visited South Korea and Japan, where he participated in another summit of countries affiliated with the quadrilateral QUAD format.

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There has been no doubt in recent decades as to the steadily growing economic and military position of the People's Republic of China. According to the 2021 Global Firepower ranking, China's armed forces are the third (after the United States and Russia) military power in the world, with an annual defense budget of \$178.2 billion (USD)¹. China has the largest army globally in terms of numbers – 2.25 million active soldiers and 3.25 million in total with its paramilitary formations. In the event of an emergency, the People's Liberation

Army of China can call up over 7 million people, it also has 216 million reservists.

China is also showing continuous economic progress. Since 2010, it has been the second-largest (after the US) and fastest-growing national economy in the world, with an average growth rate of 10% per year over the past several decades². Besides, this country is the global largest exporter and second-largest importer³. The ever-increasing military and economic position of the regime in Beijing has given Xi Jinping

¹ Global Firepower – World Military Strength, 2022 *China Military Strength*, https://www.globalfirepower.com/country-military-strength-detail.php?country_id=china, [accessed 7.04.2022].

² Report for Selected Countries and Subjects. International Monetary Fund.

³ China overview. In: The World Factbook [online]. CIA, 2011.

an increasingly powerful platform to pursue his doctrine of the ‘Chinese dream’, manifested, among other things, in his growing territorial aspirations in the Indo-Pacific region. China’s rising interference is spreading throughout the entire world, but its most dangerous level can be observed in this area.

China’s aggression poses a threat to the allies and partners of the United States in the region: Japan, South Korea, Australia, and Taiwan. Australia has been exposed to such increased pressure, both economic and military, in recent weeks. It follows the agreement signed by the Solomon Islands and the People’s Republic of China, which may result in the creation of permanent bases for the Chinese army less than 2,000 kilometers from the Australian coast. According to *The Guardian*, the US Assistant Secretary of State for East Asian and Pacific Affairs, Daniel Kritenbrink, said the deal between Beijing and Honiara carries “potential regional security implications” for the United States and other allies. Kritenbrink also did not rule out military action by the US in the event of efforts to establish Chinese People’s Liberation Army military bases in the Solomon Islands. The American army has confirmed that US–Australian military exercises are planned to take place at the RAAF military base in the northern part of Western Australia this July.

The United States will also begin a high-level strategic dialogue with the Solomon Islands in September. The visit of Kurt Campbell, the top US White House official for Indo-Pacific affairs, to Fiji in April 2022, and the new Australian diplomatic minister Penny Wong following in his footsteps in late May this year should be seen as preparation for these negotiations. The September talks are expected to address common security concerns and improve cooperation on public health,

finance, and other key issues. The Biden administration has also announced a plan to reopen its embassy in the Solomon Islands.

Other areas threatened by China are Taiwan, which is experiencing increasing tensions, border territories with Japan in the East China Sea, as well as areas in the South China Sea. China’s authoritarian turn under Xi Jinping and deteriorating relations with Washington have brought Formosa (Taiwan) closer to the sphere of influence of the United States. This has angered Beijing, prompting China to exert more pressure on Taiwan through numerous military exercises and provocations in border areas. Based on the implementation of the *One China policy*, Washington recognizes the existence of Xi Jinping’s regime as the legitimate government and recognizes its position that Taiwan is part of China. But the Americans have never accepted the claims of the Chinese Communist Party over Taiwan. The only approach that they will accept is the peaceful reunification of these areas according to the will of the people of Taiwan.

Recently, there has been an intensification of efforts to seize islands and atolls in the South China Sea. These are mainly areas belonging to neighboring countries under current international law – Malaysia, Brunei, the Philippines, and Vietnam, among others. They are highly strategic, as they are the gateway for most Chinese goods and the shortest export route to Europe. They are rich in natural resources and crucial for international trade. They have also been one of the flashpoints in China’s relations with its neighbors and the United States for more than a dozen years. Washington accuses Beijing of militarizing the basin and menacing other regional capitals to deprive them of access to their resources.

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China recognizes almost the entirety of the South China Sea as its territory, and taking control of it is now one of Beijing's main foreign policy goals. In 2016, the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague recognized the illegality of all Beijing's territorial pursuits and claims.

The Joe Biden administration's response was the Indo-Pacific Strategy presented in February 2022.

The anticipated US actions include, among other things:

1. investing in democratic institutions, a free press, and a vibrant civil society;
2. improving fiscal transparency in the Indo-Pacific region to expose corruption and stimulate reform;
3. ensuring that the region's seas and skies are protected and used according to international law;
4. establishing partnerships to build resilience in the Pacific Islands;
5. building bridges between the Indo-Pacific and the Euro-Atlantic;
6. conducting integrated deterrence;
7. expanding the presence and cooperation of the US Coast Guard against other international threats;
8. fostering innovation to operate in rapidly evolving threat environments, including space, cyberspace, and critical and emerging technology areas;
9. continuing partnership within AUKUS;
10. maintaining peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait⁴.

⁴ *Indo-Pacific Strategy*, White House, whitehouse.gov, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2022/02/US-Indo-Pacific-Strategy.pdf>.

The White House strategy was also included in the Pentagon's projected spending for fiscal year 2023.

According to the budget proposal released by President Joe Biden on March 28, 2022, the Pentagon could have up to \$773 billion available. The White House proposes \$1.8 billion to fund the US Indo-Pacific strategy, including \$400 million to counter the growing aspirations of the People's Republic of China. To avoid dissolving the government, the US Congress must negotiate and pass this spending plan by September 30, 2022.

The United States is showing that, even in the times of the war in Ukraine, it is not losing sight of this threat, as evidenced by the recent actions of American diplomacy in Asia.

Joe Biden's visit to the Pacific region began in South Korea on May 20, 2022, and lasted two days. During this time, the US President met with the recently sworn-in President of the Republic of Korea, Yoon Suk-yeol. The conversation between the leaders of the two countries was no coincidence, as it was Yoon Suk-yeol who, in his election campaign, advocated a significant strengthening of bilateral relations between the United States and South Korea. The message promoted by the Korean politician is consistent with the voice of the majority of countries in the region, which resist China's growing territorial and political aspirations. Indeed, the reason for the efforts to strengthen relations with Washington is not only the issue of the looming threat from North Korea but, above all, from the People's Republic of China.

The talks between the two delegations resulted in a series of agreements, including cooperation in semiconductor manufacturing, batteries, civil nuclear

power, space research development, cyberspace, and other emerging industries. The leaders of the two countries also aim to pursue South Korea's economic diversification to make it as independent as possible from China, which remains the main South Korean trading partner.

The Biden administration is well-aware of the economic and defense potential of the Republic of Korea. A potential weakening of economic ties or complete severance of South Korea's economic relations with China would translate into losses for Xi Jinping's regime amounting to up to \$150 billion annually. This is the value of Chinese exports to South Korea last year⁵.

However, Korea is gradually severing its economic ties with the People's Republic of China. As of April 2022, the value of its exports to China dropped by nearly \$26 billion⁶. In terms of military aspects, South Korea's army is currently ranked sixth in the world, ahead of the UK and France, among others⁷. Biden's visit to South Korea is a clear response to China's widening influence. It is also another partner strengthening the US position in the region, which gives a strong argument for the implementation of the *Pax Americana* doctrine in this region of the world.

After his visit to Korea, Joe Biden landed in Japan, where the group of key US partners in the region was joined by representatives of the QUAD countries. On Monday, May 23, in a joint press conference with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, the

⁵ <https://tradingeconomics.com/china/exports/south-korea>

⁶ <https://tradingeconomics.com/south-korea/exports-to-china>

⁷ <https://www.globalfirepower.com/countries-listing.php>

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US president firmly began his visit by assuring that, in the event of kinetic aggression by mainland China against Taiwan, the US will respond militarily. The words, spoken in the almost immediate vicinity of the People's Republic of China, carry great significance and are a severe warning to the regime. They are a signal to Chinese communists that the United States is confident and ready to defend its hegemony in this region of the world.

As CNN reports, Biden's comments quickly attracted Beijing's attention, with China expressing "strong dissatisfaction and firm opposition" to Biden's comments, saying it would not allow any outside force to interfere in its 'internal affairs'⁸. Indeed, since the beginning of his term, Xi Jinping has been pursuing policies that are expected to lead not only to rapid economic and military development but also to 'reclaim' disputed territories for China.

During bilateral talks with Japanese Prime Minister Fumio Kishida, Joe Biden endorsed Japan's plan to increase its defense capabilities, thus confirming cooperation between the United States and Japan in countering China's growing influence in the Pacific. As the Republic of Korea, Japan is a leading military power in the region.

"The U.S.–Japan alliance has long been a cornerstone of peace and prosperity in the Indo-Pacific region, and the United States remains fully committed to defending Japan," Biden said at the start of talks with Kishida at the Akasaka Palace in central Tokyo⁹.

⁸ <https://edition.cnn.com/2022/05/23/politics/joe-biden-japan-tuesday/index.html>

⁹ <https://www.aljazeera.com/economy/2022/5/23/biden-tells-good-friend-kishida-us-committed-to-japan-defence>

In Tokyo, President Biden launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework for Prosperity (IPEF) with a dozen initial partners: Australia, Brunei, India, Indonesia, Japan, the Republic of Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, the Philippines, Singapore, Thailand, and Vietnam. Together, these countries account for 40% of the world's GDP¹⁰. Biden's plan will focus on key pillars to establish high-standard commitments deepening the signatories' economic engagement in the region. These include building new economic connections between the countries in the area, supporting small and medium companies, streamlining supply chains, making the economy more resilient to price changes, increasing the share of clean energy, decarbonizing the economy, making tax changes more effective, and preventing financial crimes¹¹.

During their quadrilateral meeting, the United States, Japan, Australia, and India presented an initiative to curb illegal fishing in the Indo-Pacific. This is one of the latest efforts by QUAD members to counter Chinese activities in the region where China is responsible for 95% of illegal fishing¹².

QUAD leaders emphasized the need for free navigation in the East China Sea and the South China Sea and expressed opposition to the militarization of the disputed areas. However, many of the

¹⁰ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/23/fact-sheet-in-asia-president-biden-and-a-dozen-indo-pacific-partners-launch-the-indo-pacific-economic-framework-for-prosperity/>

¹¹ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/23/fact-sheet-in-asia-president-biden-and-a-dozen-indo-pacific-partners-launch-the-indo-pacific-economic-framework-for-prosperity/>

¹² <https://www.ft.com/content/4066cc72-119a-48e2-b55c-980c4e3f6c9a?shareType=nongift>

statements lacked a direct reference to China.

Strengthening ties with Pacific Island countries was also announced during the quadrilateral negotiations. This will involve bilateral and multilateral alliances. One reason for such declarations is the recent China's agreement with the Solomon Islands.

The four allies ended Tuesday's summit with a joint statement vowing an "unwavering commitment to a free and open Indo-Pacific region that is inclusive and resilient"¹³.

Bilateral talks between the United States and India also took place on the sidelines of this summit. Joe Biden is well aware of the important role Prime Minister Narendra Modi's country plays in the sustainability of the Indo-Pacific security arrangement. India, however, has not disavowed its links with the Russian Federation after Vladimir Putin invaded Ukraine three months ago. The two countries have long enjoyed friendly relations and close defense cooperation – over 50% of India's military equipment comes from Russia. India buys the most weapons from Russia globally. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), it has purchased more than \$25 billion worth of military equipment from Russia over the past decade. Four times more than this country spent on US equipment¹⁴.

During the meeting, Biden spoke first. The president highlighted the newly revealed economic plans of the anti-China coalition in Indo-Pacific waters,

as well as ongoing efforts to support the production of the COVID-19 vaccine in India. Modi then presented his remarks, calling the Tokyo summit "very positive and productive." He praised the US-India relationship as a "partnership of trust" and a force for global good¹⁵.

Biden's strategy in this relationship, however, is to build relations on the similarities between the two countries and their interests in the region. According to a senior US administration official, despite differences in the perception of human rights or relations with Russia, the United States is working hard to develop the cooperation of India with the Free World¹⁶. Due to its economic and military potential, India could become one of the key countries involved in the showdown between the world's two leading powers.

Tokyo was also a place of the meeting between Australia's newly sworn-in Prime Minister Anthony Albanese and Joe Biden. Just three days before the start of the summit, the Labor Party won the election, and its leader became the new Prime Minister several hours before flying to Tokyo. The aim of the meeting between the leaders of the two countries was to reaffirm the strong alliance between the United States and Australia.

President Biden confirmed his continued support for the United States' multilevel cooperation with Australia and his commitment to its further strengthening. The US President also praised Australia's determined efforts to assist Ukraine attacked by

¹³ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/24/quad-joint-leaders-statement/>

¹⁴ <https://warsawinstitute.org/pl/rosja-straci-indyjski-rynek-gry-wchodza-stany-zjednoczone/>

¹⁵ <https://edition.cnn.com/asia/live-news/biden-asia-trip-quad-summit-05-24-22/index.html>

¹⁶ <https://www.ndtv.com/world-news/quad-summit-2022-joe-biden-looks-to-stress-commonalities-with-india-in-talks-us-official-3003158>

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the Russian Federation. The leaders of both countries also agreed that continued solidarity and assistance to Ukraine is a preventive measure to ensure that a similar event never happens in Indo-Pacific waters. From the official White House briefing made after the meeting, one can also learn that the politicians praised the progress of allied cooperation within AUKUS, and Albanese declared his full support for the US plan for an Indo-Pacific Economic Framework¹⁷.

What is certain is that Joe Biden is working skillfully and confidently to strengthen the Indo-Pacific partnership.

¹⁷ <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/05/24/readout-of-president-bidens-meeting-with-prime-minister-albanese-of-australia/>

The US president spent his trip to Asia consolidating military and economic ties with leaders of the region's leading democracies and discussing the potential intensification of joint military exercises with South Korea. Joe Biden also launched the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework. Only a united and economically and militarily strong QUAD member states and bilateral relations between the United States and its allies can contain the growing ambitions of the People's Republic of China. The US President's visit to Asia was another step in the implementation of the political doctrine of *Pivot to Asia* and the maintenance of *Pax Americana* in this region of the world.

Jan Hernik ■
June 2022

IS INCREASING INTERFERENCE BY THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA IN THE INDO-PACIFIC REGION A THREAT TO THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES?

JAN HERNIK'S INTERVIEW WITH PROFESSOR DAVID A. JONES

The role of the People's Republic of China in the world is growing every year. China is becoming a world power, both economically and militarily. The development of this country, however, raises concerns and the need to strengthen the position of countries associated in alliances with the US and harnesses the world hegemon, the United States of America, to act. Professor David A. Jones, an expert in the field of US foreign policy and international relations, talked to Jan Hernik, editor-in-chief of *The Warsaw Institute Review*, about the activities of the Joe Biden administration, the growing position of China in the Indo-Pacific region, and the prospects for the future of relations between world powers.



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JAN HERNIK: THE OFFICIAL STRATEGY FOR THE INDO-PACIFIC OPERATION OF THE JOE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION WAS RELEASED IN FEBRUARY THIS YEAR. IT ASSUMES, FOR EXAMPLE:

- ENSURING THAT THE SEAS AND SKIES OF THE REGION ARE GOVERNED AND USED ACCORDING TO INTERNATIONAL LAW;**
 - PARTNERING TO BUILD RESILIENCE IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS;**
 - CONTINUING PARTNERSHIP WITHIN AUKUS;**
 - MAINTAINING PEACE AND STABILITY IN THE TAIWAN STRAIT.**
- HOW DO YOU ASSESS THE ACTIVITIES OF THE JOE BIDEN ADMINISTRATION IN THIS REGARD? DOES THE US PROVE THAT THEY HAVE NOT FORGOTTEN THE MAIN THREAT OF CHINA’S DEVELOPMENT?**

Well, I assess the Biden administration’s response in the Indo-Pacific as being a continuation of the response of his predecessors. What we think in international relations, we have to keep in mind continuity and sometimes adoration of continuity based on the personalities of the people involved. The

Obama administration and the Trump administration both had a continuation of this policy, and also Biden is continuing it in the Indo-Pacific region. However, in the Obama administration, during his first term, his secretary of state was Hilary Rodham Clinton, former first lady and former New York senator. She was replaced in the second term by John F. Kerry, a former senator from Massachusetts. Hilary Clinton had developed a strategy that she called the ‘Pivot to Asia’. Pivot, as a turn to face Asia. In some respects, it worked, in other respects, it possibly could be considered similar to His Holiness Pope Francis’s assessment of NATO and Russia. He said that we [NATO] are “barking at Russia’s doorstep”. In some way, he is correct. You could argue that the ‘Pivot to Asia’ did a little bit of growling at the doorstep of China. During the second Obama administration, he backed off a little there. Trump backed off even more, but then bit in the areas of tariffs. I think what Biden wants to do is to keep everything copacetic and keep everything the way it has been throughout most of the 21st century or since the time of Deng Xiaoping as the China leader and then Hu Jintao’s administration up to the early period of the Xi Jinping administration



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before Xi started to develop this concept of an ‘Asian dream’ that would advance China more than possibly the West would like.

IN RECENT DAYS, WE HAVE RECEIVED INFORMATION ABOUT AN AGREEMENT CONCLUDED BY THE SOLOMON ISLANDS WITH THE PEOPLE’S REPUBLIC OF CHINA. THE RESULT OF THIS AGREEMENT MAY BE INTERFERENCE BY CHINESE TROOPS IN THE REGION. THERE IS ALSO TALK OF THE POSSIBILITY OF ESTABLISHING PERMANENT CHINESE MILITARY BASES ON ISLANDS LESS THAN 2,000 KILOMETERS FROM THE AUSTRALIAN COAST. AUSTRALIA’S HEAD OF DEFENSE, PETER DUTTON, SAYS BLUNTLY THAT AUSTRALIA MUST BE GETTING READY FOR WAR. IS HE RIGHT?

I think it is very hard to second guess not being a commander responsible for billions of people. I would not purport to second guess President Biden or President Xi Jinping or any such person without the intelligence they have, but I do not have. No, I do not believe that Fiji and its reverse are on course with YSP F4, I don’t think that means war with Australia. It could

mean, of course, a Chinese landing space that would be *nearer* to Australia, not near to Australia, but nearer to Australia. That would be grounds for Australian concern but remember that General Douglas McArthur’s headquarters during World War II was mostly in Australia, which means that Australia can be heavily fortified and is heavily fortified and is part of the Five Eyes intelligence component. It would have the complete support of the United Kingdom and the United States of America, and I don’t think China is planning a war against Australia right now or at any time in the foreseeable future. I think they want Fiji just for posturing.

MANY OBSERVERS OF THIS SITUATION SAY THAT 2022 HONIARA MIGHT BE FOR AUSTRALIA THE SAME WHAT HAVANA WAS FOR THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA IN 1962. WOULD YOU LIKE TO COMMENT ON THAT?

Remember that President Kennedy was confronted with missiles 90 miles [135 km] from the coast of South Florida. Fiji is way further from Australia than that [4,664 km]. The Havana issues and the Cuban issues have to do with the Soviet Union, which the United States considered at that time to be

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something much more than the 'paper tiger'. I would argue that today we have bipolarity, we still have unipolarity for practical purposes. I don't think China is in a position to take on the United States, much less the United States plus the United Kingdom, even outside of the rest of the Western alliance. I do not think that the People's Republic of China will immediately, and hopefully never, make a mistake that President Putin and Russia have made: launching aggression when you are not capable of executing it within the normal standards. China does not like to lose face, no Asian people or country like to lose face. Putin has lost a tremendous face in the eyes of the world, and I do not think that Xi Jinping is going to advance to Australia through Fiji or anywhere else right now until he gets his ducks far more in order.

DO YOU BELIEVE THAT, IN THE LIGHT OF WHAT YOU JUST SAID, THE US STILL HOLDS THIS SO-CALLED PAX AMERICANA IN THE REGION? OR MAYBE THE US HAS TO RELY MORE AND MORE ON ALLIANCES, BOTH BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL ALLIANCES, TO BUILD THE PREVENTIVE STRENGTH TO FACE THE CHINESE, THE BIGGEST NAVY IN THE WORLD RIGHT NOW?

Sure. We thought that Russia also had the largest army. We saw what happened when they couldn't manipulate and steer it. To answer your question, I think we know from observation that President Biden is a very conscientious president – no 'no fly zone' over Ukraine, no troops or boots on the ground in Ukraine – 36 years in the US Senate, eight years as vice-president, and now 1,5 years as president. For all his infirmities and he may have health problems, I never laugh at them, while some people do, but he is a very conscientious president. I think he wants both PAX AMERICANA, the peace of America, plus Alliances – as

many as he can possibly have. In my opinion, America has very strong allies in the Pacific region: Japan, South Korea, Taiwan, and then the most important ally in many respects – a combination of Australia and New Zealand. They are extremely valuable. Never would the United Kingdom or the United States even remotely consider letting them be invaded without consequence or giving them up. I believe that the answer to your question is both: a very strong PAX AMERICANA, I think President Biden will take this part of Hillary Clinton's concept of the 'Pivot to Asia' very seriously, and, of course, a reliance on American Allies everywhere, including especially the Indo-Pacific.

US DEPUTY SECRETARY OF STATE FOR EAST ASIA AND THE PACIFIC, DANIEL KRITENBRINK, SAID THE BEIJING-HONIARA DEAL HAD "POTENTIAL IMPLICATIONS FOR REGIONAL SECURITY" FOR THE US AND OTHER ALLIES. KRITENBRINK ALSO DID NOT RULE OUT MILITARY ACTION BY THE AMERICAN SIDE IN THE EVENT OF ACTIONS AIMED AT ESTABLISHING MILITARY BASES OF THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S LIBERATION ARMY IN THE SOLOMON ISLANDS. US-AUSTRALIAN MILITARY MANEUVERS IN THE NORTHERN PART OF THE CONTINENT ARE ALSO SCHEDULED FOR JULY. IS THIS AN ADEQUATE RESPONSE FROM THE AMERICAN SIDE?

I think number 1, the purpose of the PRC is to try to negotiate some space on the Solomon Islands. It is to minimize the likelihood that the United States would have the same opportunity there because obviously if the US were called upon to defend Australia, which I do not think is likely to be in any near term, but if they are called upon to defend Taiwan it would be useful to have such kind of space. This is, I think, posturing by China to deprive

the United States of part of its tiny alliance there or larger landing areas in that region. It is a way of sending a message to the United States “Your alliance is coming undone”. I do not believe this alliance is coming undone, but I believe China would like to send this message. Now, as to Australian and American naval maneuvers, that is reverse posturing, too. These are the United States showing to the world, especially China, that the US is there to support the United Kingdom. In other words, “I have your back” in military terms because Australia and New Zealand are a part of the Commonwealth structure and they have a primary responsibility to defend them. The United Kingdom and the United States have a ‘special relationship’ and this special relationship means rescuing one another. Then you have some other questions there as well. I think this all circulates around the issue of Taiwan. I don’t think China has any ambition toward Australia, nor does Australia need Fiji Islands, America might a little bit.

SO, IS IT JUST TURNING THE WORLD’S ATTENTION TOWARDS THE SOLOMON ISLANDS, BUT, AT THE SAME TIME, CHINA WANTS TO WEAKEN TAIWAN?

Yes. I think this is China’s overriding objective. This has been the case for President Xi Jinping since he came to office in 2012, but also for his predecessors. They all have taken the position that, ultimately, they wanted a reunification of Taiwan. Now, that is an understandable position. That is, Chinese territory, it was occupied by Japan for a long time, but it is a Chinese territory in the modern and postmodern periods. The people on the island of Formosa (Taiwan) are ethnically Chinese. Largely they are ethnically Han Chinese, but they are Chinese. China wants it back. It should be understandable to the world the reasons why China wants it back. I also think it is understandable to China, the world and certainly to the

Biden administration that China cannot take it back by violence. It has to take it by a peaceful requisition, a peaceful reunification over time – very much the way Germany was reunified in 1991 and the way probably, eventually North and South Korea will be reunified, the same way North and South Vietnam reunified when the conflict stopped there. Patience is the word that the Chinese culture is very familiar with. They look to the long term, and I just hope they look to the long term because I can assure you that the United States of America, both parties in Congress are very strongly pro-Taiwan independence. After all, the law of the United Nation and the community since World War II has been and that is [that] the people have the right to decide their future, to decide their governance. The people of Taiwan have the same right as anybody else. It would seem very clearly to the people of Taiwan, from their recent elections, that they agree that at the moment Taiwan needs to maintain its independence. I do not think that America or any other country should get involved in trying to make that permanent. This is what China does not want: permanent separation from its own people in Taiwan. Insofar as the moment is concerned, I would hope that China understands that they got millions of people out of poverty with Western trade, the United States of America and the United Kingdom spearheaded that. Trade would be taken away. Don’t do that! Trade should continue with both mainland China and Taiwan. You asked me what the Biden administration’s goal is there... This is exactly what the Biden administration’s goal is and should be.

LET’S CONTINUE THE TOPIC OF ALLIANCES IN THE REGION. THE QUAD SUMMIT WILL BE HELD AT THE END OF MAY IN TOKYO. WE HAVE THIS ALLIANCE, WE SEE AUKUS, AND ALSO SOME TIME AGO THERE

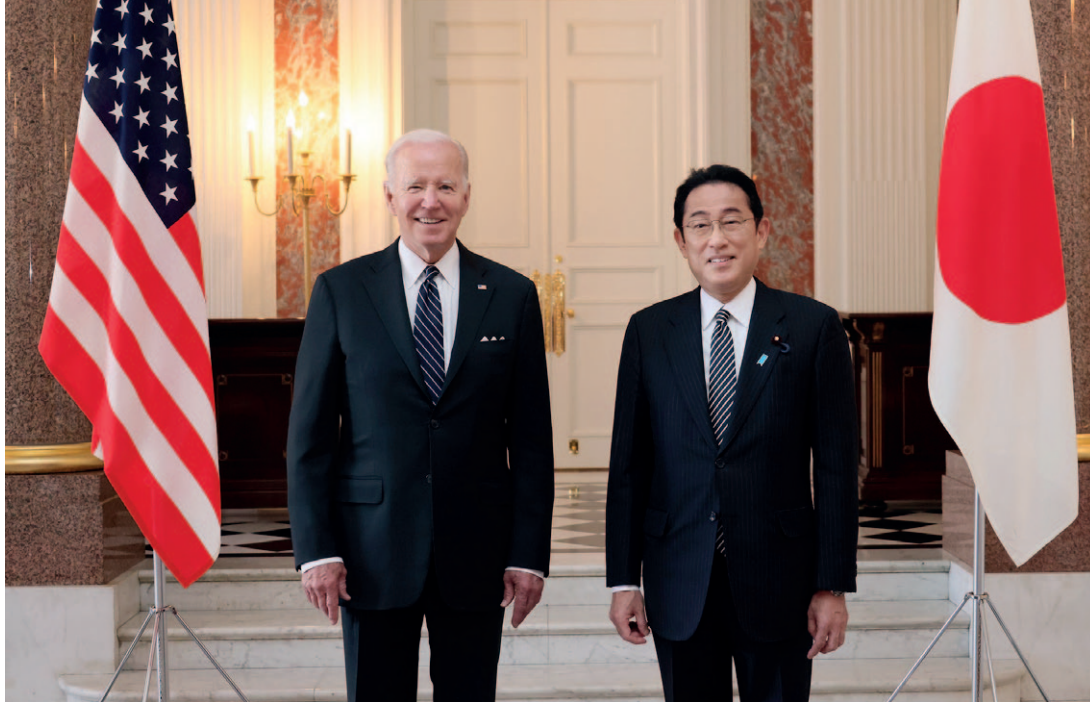


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WAS THIS PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN AUSTRALIA, NEW ZEALAND, AND THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA CALLED ANZUS. I WANTED TO ASK ABOUT YOUR EVALUATION OF THIS ANGLO-SAXON COOPERATION IN THE REGION IN TERMS OF SECURITY AND DEFENSE IN THE REGION.

For somebody who has six children, I recognize that you might have alliances within alliances, and sometime they might come undone. I do not believe that the world should be an Anglo-Saxon-only world. I think it should be, it has been, and it should be in the foreseeable future an Anglo-American-led alliance, including the Pacific rim. You are going to have alliances among the participants who reside in the region. You are going to have the QUAD, for example, as a major alliance. We expect our allies to have their own alliances with each other, but not opposed to the United Kingdom or the United States in that relationship. This is what we have. These alliances are not in any way threatening the security of the Western Alliance. Let's call it 'Western Alliance' because I don't like to use 'Anglo-American' too much. These alliances are all very positive in several ways.

Gathering of intelligence – that's of course the Five Eyes, I guess Six Eyes with the Republic of Korea. We have intelligence capabilities, which are extremely important. We need our local partners to cooperate because it is in their interest to do that. They are very valuable partners. Japan is becoming an extremely pro-Western ally during most of its prime ministerial administrations since World War II. It should be because the United States, with some participation from the United Kingdom, has rebuilt it into a very prosperous country. I have been there, it's a wonderful country and its alliance is very valuable. The South Korean alliance is very valuable, and the Singapore alliance is also very valuable. Of course, without question, the Australia-New Zealand alliance both with South Korea, Singapore, Japan, Taiwan – that area and with the United Kingdom and the United States. These are formidable alliances that no one should take for granted. They could all come undone, but I don't think they will if we work toward our mutual benefit. I think China knows that. I hope this PRC knows that and respects it, as they always talk about the need to 'respect' them. You are talking to somebody who has



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enormous respect for China. I have been there 20 times. I have been all over. The only place I have not been is Manchuria [Northeastern China]. I have been to this place so many times, I have stayed in people's homes, I think I know China very well from the grassroots. I do not believe that Chinese people are foolish. I believe they are very smart. I do not believe that President Xi Jinping will make the mistake that President Putin seems to have made in Russia. In one example of that, in the International Court of Justice, in the World Court, in a case of *Ukraine against Russia*, the president of that court is an American woman [H.E. Judge Joan E. Donoghue]. Of the 15 judges on the court, 13 of them strongly supported Ukraine. Even the Chinese judge was very, very careful. He took his orders very clearly from Beijing. He said: "China respects sovereignty". Of course, at the same time, it doesn't recognize Taiwan's sovereignty, understand that, but basically he said that China does not recommend the invasion of other countries. It prefers alliances, it prefers diplomatic negotiations. I believe that this is an important talisman as a forecast of China's behavior in the near term, in the mid term, and in the long term – at least under the Xi Jinping administration.

PROFESSOR, YOU TOLD US ABOUT CHINA, SO I HAVE TO MENTION THE SOUTH CHINA SEA. THIS IS THE MAIN PLACE OF CHINESE INTERFERENCE IN THE REGION. WE HAVE TO BE CLEAR HERE THAT CHINA BREAKS INTERNATIONAL LAW. THIS HAPPENS IN THE SOUTH CHINA SEA, WE TALK ABOUT THE ANNEXATION OF THE ISLANDS, WHICH DO NOT BELONG TO CHINA. WE SEE ATTACKS ON AMERICAN SHIPS, FOR EXAMPLE, THE USS BENFOLD WAS FIRED OFF THE COAST OF THE PARCEL ISLANDS. HOW TO STOP CHINA? IT IS CLEARLY VISIBLE THAT CHINA DOES NOT HAVE TO BE AN ENEMY...

It is clearly visible that China not only does not have to be an enemy, China is not an enemy, and should never be an enemy.

YES, BUT AT THE SAME TIME THEY DO ALL THE THINGS I MENTIONED.

Well, we do a lot, too. We, meaning the Western Alliance. You talk about the artificial islands, and of course, we did have a court case in the Court of Arbitration of the United Nations. That was the case of *The Philippines against the People's Republic of China* and The Philippines won. It was a strong victory for the Philippines saying what you just

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summarized, that the South China Sea area does not belong to China. China claims a historical right to this area, but these are international waterways today. We see very clearly that to the extent that some of the waters are coastal waters, they would belong under current international law to the countries that they surround, the Philippines, for example, as well as Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, and Vietnam, for example. This is not Chinese territory. I suppose your explicit question is why China built these airbases on atolls and some type of coral reefs there. Of course, I don't know, because China doesn't tell me that, but I think it is very transparent that their purpose is to enable them to control that area. It is partially posturing, it is partially saying that 'if you guys go to war with us, we will cut off the easiest trade access from East Asia to Europe – it's through the South China Sea. There would not be trade with China if we were at war with China, but there would still be trade with Japan and South Korea. They would be going to try to block that – that's posturing, and on the other hand, these atolls might be taken by the United States pretty easily. I think it is simply a showing tongue 'here we are, we are a big country, we are a proud country, we have a strong heritage, we have provided many goods and widgets to the West and you want to respect our military capability.' I think it would be foolish for any country not to respect the military capabilities of the PRC. However, this does not mean that the Biden administration or the Johnson administration in the UK or any of the Western administrations, have to capitulate to Chinese aggression in that region or anywhere else. There are other areas in question too, areas of India, for example, and the Indian subcontinent, or Sri Lanka. These are areas of China's 'One Belt, One Road' initiative. China has huge investments in Asia and outside of Asia, much more than Russia does. Senator John S. McCain, III, late Republican from

Arizona, once said that Russia "is a gas station masquerading as a country". You cannot say that about China. China is a very realistic nation, a proud nation, a major nation, and it has invested heavily in trying to connect to neighboring countries, at least in its wide region. This is a country trying to move forward, I believe, peacefully. I think someone like Xi Jinping would not want to give all of that up by making a foolish move like Vladimir Putin did for Russia in Ukraine. To get nothing out of it, to become far, far worse off than better off. That is my hope.

YES. LET US HOPE THAT THE PEACE WILL BE RESPECTED BY BOTH SIDES. THE LAST QUESTION I WILL HAVE FOR YOU IS THE ONE REGARDING THE PRESENT SITUATION IN THE WORLD. TODAY, MANY POLITICAL SCIENTISTS AND GEOPOLITICS EXPERTS MOSTLY OBSERVE THE WAR IN UKRAINE. IT SEEMS THAT MANY EXPERTS IN THIS FIELD FORGOT ABOUT THE INDO-PACIFIC, AT LEAST IN THE POLISH MEDIA. DON'T YOU FEEL THAT IT IS THE WAY I SAID IT?

Well. I do read the Polish news and I think your assessment is accurate, but one of the reasons is that Poland is so approximate to Ukraine, a straight rocket that hit Lviv is a very serious problem for your country. There is a danger of a straight rocket hitting Poland, so of course, Poland is very focused on the war in Ukraine. I am not convinced that the rest of the world is. I am not convinced the Biden administration needs to be. I believe that the Biden administration is focused on pan-global bases, and I believe that this is one of the reasons President Biden did not want to declare a no-fly zone over Ukraine. America would have to enforce it by shooting down Russian jets. That is also the reason he did not want American troops on the ground, and I think Americans did not want that



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either. I think he is right there. Insofar as to where everybody else stands, it is a good question. I think that most of the Western Alliance keep their eyes on everything, but one area we need to keep our eyes on even more, but that I think has slipped a little, and that is the Russian Federation with the American sanctions which are now being obeyed even by Germany with the pipeline. This is tough to give up, as one would prefer not to give up a chocolate cookie, but it is necessary. The only lifeline that the Russian Federation really has is a Chinese economic lifeline. They have already asked China for troops, and China said “no” – very wisely. I hope it is not going to change its mind. China has been pouring some money into Russia, diplomatically I would like that to stop. In 1955-56, the Eisenhower administration asked Soviet defense minister Marshal of the Soviet Union Georgy Zhukov to pull Mao Zedong back from the shelling of Quemoy-Matsu islands in the Taiwan Strait. They backed off. I think sovereign nations might do that in reverse right now. I think somebody needs to talk to Xi Jinping and the Foreign Ministry of the People’s Republic of China and say: “You know guys, we got you out of poverty, do

you want to go back to poverty? We love Chinese products. The western people really are friends of the Chinese people”, and so am I. Someone should say to Xi: “You don’t want to be a part of this war crime effort, you don’t want to be killing children in their homes and doing these disgusting things. Surely, you don’t want to be lining up your tanks in formation where drones can fly over and pick them off. You don’t want to have that kind of incompetence in your general staff and, President Xi Jinping, you do not have such incompetence in your general staff. So back off from Russia, let it go its own road, stay with us the way things have been and everything will work out well.” My prediction would be that within 20 years or a shorter period of time, there will be a peaceful reunification of the territory that is considered to be pan-Chinese, the Taiwan Strait area. Peaceful.

**LET US HOPE THAT THIS
RELATIONSHIP WILL BE BASED
ON PEACE AND MUTUAL RESPECT.
THANK YOU SO MUCH FOR YOUR
TIME AND EXPERTISE!**

Thank you very much Jan, anytime, my pleasure!

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM HUNGARY'S ELECTIONS? CONFLICTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF HUNGARIAN POLITICS

MARIUSZ PATEY

- On April 3, 2022, the Fidesz-KDNP coalition won Hungary's elections for the fifth term in a row.
- Despite Russia's large-scale military aggression against Ukraine, the leader of the winning coalition has not changed his anti-Ukrainian and pro-Kremlin rhetoric.
- Hungary is trying to undermine the EU's sanctions policy against Russia, but still votes for them, provided they have the support of large EU states, i.e., Germany and France.
- In the UN, Hungary voted together with Western countries to suspend Russia from the UN Human Rights Council and did not oppose Russia's exclusion from the Council of Europe.
- Budapest has announced that it will not supply weapons or allow arms shipments from third countries into Ukraine. At the same time, this country is accepting war refugees from Ukraine.
- Since the first victory of the Fidesz-KDNP coalition, the EU has been willing to punish Hungary for the alleged departure from European values regarding the rights of sexual minorities, the right to abortion,



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restrictions on media freedom, and violations of the so-called democratic state standards.

- Budapest is looking for sources of capital outside the EU, for instance, in Russia and China, while becoming politically dependent on these countries.
- Hungary's energy policy, which makes the country dependent on energy resources and technology (in the case of nuclear power) from Russia, has not changed after February 24, 2022.
- Hungary buys gas from Russia while bypassing Ukraine.
- Alongside Orlen, OMV, and the German refineries Schwedt and Leuna (Schwedt controlled by Russia's Rosneft and France's Total-Leuna), MOL is among the leading consumers of Russian oil in Central Europe. Unlike Orlen, it does not intend to limit the role of Russian oil and maintains the exploitation of its extraction licenses in Russia.
- After Viktor Orban's statements relativizing the blame of the Kremlin for starting the war against Ukraine, Polish-Hungarian relations cooled down.

- There is a danger that Russia could use strategic Hungarian companies to infiltrate and influence the Polish energy and petrochemical markets.
- There may be cooperation in selected areas, especially in the context of philosophical disputes in the European Parliament, weakening federalist aspirations of EU politicians, or counteracting the imposition of fines on Poland.
- Hungary's attitude weakens Polish initiatives aimed at deepening cooperation between the countries of Central and Eastern Europe.

HUNGARY'S APRIL 2018 AND 2022 ELECTION RESULTS: ASTONISHING STABILITY

The ruling Fidesz-KDNP coalition won the parliamentary elections in Hungary held on April 8, 2018. Its 49% result gave it a constitutional majority. Of the opposition parties, the national radical Jobbik was the most successful, with 19.44% of the votes. The parties running a common list, the Hungarian Socialist Party (MSZP), 12.32% of the vote, Politics Can Be Different (LMP), 6.91%, and the Democratic Coalition (DK), 5.57%, were also elected.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM HUNGARY'S ELECTIONS? CONFLICTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF HUNGARIAN POLITICS

It seemed that amidst the economic crisis caused by the pandemic and the shock of the Russian aggression against Ukraine, Viktor Orbán would not repeat the success of four years ago. On Sunday, April 3, 2022, the Fidesz–KDNP Party Alliance formed by two political parties, the Fidesz (Hungarian Civic Alliance) and the KDNP (Christian Democratic People's Party), led by Viktor Orbán, received 53% of the votes, which gave it 135 seats in the 199-seat unicameral parliament. This allowed for a constitutional majority of 68% against the constitutional threshold of two-thirds. The movement of opposition parties, Together, won 35% of the vote, giving it 56 seats (28%). The Our Homeland Movement, which is more to the right than Fidesz, and was formed by Jobbik's dissidents, also entered parliament with 6% of the vote, which gave it 7 seats (4%).

A turnout of 70% indicated the high political engagement of Hungarians and gave a strong mandate to the winning coalition. Pre-election polls did not predict such a big victory for Orbán. Apart from the governing coalition, the election threshold was to be crossed by the united opposition alliance, comprising the left-wing Democratic Coalition, the nationalist-socialist Jobbik (which is even more pro-Russian than Fidesz), the liberal Momentum Movement, the left-liberal Dialogue for Hungary, the left and green Politics May Be Different, and the post-communist, post-Kádár Hungarian Socialist Party.

REASONS FOR VIKTOR ORBÁN'S VICTORIES

1. The Hungarian electoral system

According to the electoral law amended in 2011, Hungarians have a mixed electoral system for their 199-seat parliament. 106 MPs are elected in single-member constituencies, while the remaining seats

are given to parties from national lists, which obtain more than 5% of the votes according to the d'Hondt method, as in Poland. This privileges large parties and strong, recognizable personalities. The opposition raised objections to the territorial division of constituencies, which favors the ruling coalition. Before 2011, the constituency boundaries were established to the benefit of the then-ruling socialist party. This did not prevent Viktor Orbán from winning the 2010 elections. The electoral system favors the Fidesz-KDNP governing coalition, but it is not the only determinant that keeps it in power.

2. Opposition

Now starting his fifth term as prime minister, Viktor Orbán was able to convince voters that he is the guarantor of the country's security in unstable times and that he is the one to be trusted. The opposition did not gain much with its new catchy name, Together for Hungary, and received a result below the polls. The alliance of opponents won only in Budapest but failed to triumph even in these cities, where it has control over local governments. The breakaway members of Jobbik, who were part of the alliance, successfully fought against their former party by forming the right-wing Our Homeland Movement. A populist agenda aimed at groups contesting the mandatory system of vaccinations allowed them to enter parliament. Along with the elections, a referendum was held on the Child Protection Act, according to which, during school classes about sexuality, children may not be subject to propaganda, persuaded to change their sex or to engage in 'homosexual behavior', and the state is to protect the right to maintain an identity corresponding to the sex assigned at birth. Left-wing organizations have called for a boycott of the referendum, and the bill itself has been called discriminatory. After an extensive social

media campaign that disavowed the bill, the Hungarians supported the plea, but because the turnout was less than 50% of those eligible, the referendum was invalid. Although certain Hungarian lawyers have affirmed that the proposed law is not discriminatory toward sexual orientation or gender, but protects children from manipulation and demoralization, the emotional declarations of representatives of culture and media, as well as social activists, had a greater impact on voters. Fidesz consistently advocates that parents should raise their children according to their beliefs and that this right should stand above the desire to impose the state's worldview.

Hungary does not have an unambiguously conservative political agenda in terms of its worldview, although it should be noted that a large part of Hungarian society likes the government's pro-family policy. Under the socialist government, Hungary suffered a demographic collapse that threatened the existence of its society. The increase in female fertility over the past 15 years shows the effectiveness of Orbán's policy. But Hungary can hardly be considered conservative. The law on civil partnerships was introduced under the socialist government, and it has not been challenged, although it might have been, during Orbán's terms in office. According to the law, same-sex couples have the right to property inheritance, joint taxation, and access to information on their partner's health. The law does not provide for the right to adopt children by people in civil partnerships.

The law in Hungary also excludes the adoption of children by single people or unmarried couples. According to Fidesz voters, the adoption process should first respect the well-being of children rather than fulfilling the needs and expectations of adults. According to them, children find happiness and develop best in loving,

respectful marriages, which are the basic component of family relationships. Orbán, who is a Protestant, pushed through a provision in the constitution stating that "the foundation of the family is marriage and/or the parent-child relationship. The mother is a woman, and the father is a man." The referendum was to give legitimacy to further actions securing the institution of the family as it is, according to Hungarian conservatives, threatened by the attempts of progressive social experiments prepared by the left and hidden in human rights or women's rights introduced with appropriate modifications for the needs of social transformation. Due to so-called worldview laws, the European Commission initiated a procedure against Hungary for the violation of EU law in connection with possible infringement of the fundamental rights of LGBTIQ people. However, such ideological disputes do not dominate the Hungarian political scene.

Pragmatic Hungarians appreciate economic stability and state support for families and believe Viktor Orbán's assurances that good relations with the Kremlin will allow Hungary to halt the geopolitical storms that appear closer and closer to Hungarian borders.

The confidence in Orbán did not come from anywhere. The opposition was unable to erase the memory of the mistakes made long after the systemic transformation by the post-communists, who exerted influence on all areas of public and economic life in Hungary. From the systemic transformation of 1990 to 2012, Hungary was governed for the most part by the heirs of Janos Kádár's party. Between 1994–1998 and 2002–2008, the Hungarian Socialists were the co-ruling party, and between 2008–2010, it was the party in power. The postcommunists understood as circles linked to the former communist system pursued a peculiar agenda of enriching



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themselves with public assets and strengthening their position in sectors of key importance for the state: the media, finance, and energy. By skillfully using the privatization processes they controlled, they secured their influence, making themselves independent from the whims of the voters.

Fidesz has fared differently in elections. In 1990, it won 22 seats out of 386, which amounted to 8.95%; in 1994, 20 seats out of 386 (7.02%), and in 1998, 148 seats out of 386 (28.18%). In 2002, as Fidesz-MPS, it got 188 seats (with Fidesz gaining 164) out of 386 (42,48%), in 2006, also as Fidesz-MPS, 164 seats (including 141 by Fidesz) out of 386 (42,48%). In 2010, already as Fidesz-KDNP, 263 seats (with 227 by Fidesz) out of 386 (68,13%). In 2014, the coalition of Fidesz-KDNP won 133 seats (of which Fidesz 117) out of 199 (66.83%), in 2018 133 seats (of which

Fidesz 117) out of 199, which amounted to 49.27% of votes and 66.83% of the seats.

Fidesz ruled from 1998 to 2002, after which it lost the election and yielded power to the postcommunists. The party reached for power again in 2010, following the incompetent socialist government that had plunged Hungary into public finance and economic crisis. The result was also affected by alarming information about corruption which leaked to the public. Socialist ratings have fallen significantly since the brutally repressed demonstrations in 2006. This happened after the leak of a recording from a secret meeting of the Hungarian Socialist Party, in which Prime Minister Gyurcsány bluntly stated that the economic situation was terrible, that the Socialists had done nothing for two years, and that they had lied about how good things were. The nail in the coffin was the major scandal in the

fuel sector. The media associated with Orbán obtained tapes of a meeting that took place in June 2008 between Sándor Laborc, the head of the National Security Office, and Tamás Portik, the leader of the Hungarian underworld, who offered to cooperate against the opposition in an exchange for impunity.

Portik had been prosecuted in the past for tax fraud in connection with the illegal fuel trade. His company allegedly sold gasoline and oil (officially heating oil) without paying taxes, because of which the Hungarian state lost hundreds of millions of euros. Portik was afraid of problems after Fidesz came to power. In fact, in 2012 he was arrested for ordering the murder. Hungarians already hated the socialists so much that in the spring of 2009, Prime Minister Gyurcsány resigned, and the country was led by technocrat Gordon Bajnai until the elections and Fidesz's victory.

It turns out that the voter's memory is long. Despite attempts at a makeover, the opposition has so far been unable to get rid of the memory of the Kádár's elites. Besides, such an exotic coalition combining the national socialist Jobbik, with its even more pro-Russian orientation, with the post-Kádár socialists, who wanted to be seen as pro-European, progressive, and skeptical of Orbán's pro-Putin policy, could have caused voter distrust. Hungarians were heard to doubt the good intentions of the opposition. Concern was expressed about whether the opposition simply wanted to gain the power to get benefits, as it had done in the past. Perhaps people chose Fidesz because they thought it was better in the sense of guaranteeing stability and certain security.

Voters are looking indulgently at the fact that Fidesz has begun to adopt the style of government of its predecessors because, in the past, it has kept its promises. Many

Hungarian interviewees who voted for Fidesz justified their government: „There was a time when the postcommunists controlled the country, now we are paying them back,” „Well, that is the way it is, those in power steal a little bit, what is important is that something is left for society,” Orbán gave the thieves a real hard time, so he can afford to steal a little more.”

Whether Orbán made the postcommunists accountable for their actions, as he had declared, is open to debate. However, on December 30, 2011, with the votes of the ruling Fidesz party, the National Assembly passed an amendment to the constitution, recognizing the Hungarian Socialist Party as a criminal organization bearing full responsibility for the crimes of the communist regime in this country. The constitution states that socialists *should bear responsibility for the elimination of the democratic opposition and the extermination of the Hungarian people*. The amendment set in motion a whole series of laws, among them a regulation equating the pensions of former officials of the Hungarian Socialist Workers' Party involved in the pacification of the 1956 uprising with those of the victims, and an amendment to the criminal law allowing politicians responsible for the country's debt to be prosecuted.

A Hungarian parliamentary committee concluded that the leftist governments in power between 2002 and 2010 were responsible for the increase in debt from 53% to 82% of the GDP. The opposition MPs withdrew from the committee's work, accusing the ruling coalition of an act of political revenge and populism. The amendment came into force on January 1, 2012. These measures were welcomed by many Hungarians and were visible proof that the government kept its word to voters. However, the time has shown that the politicians of the socialist party were

not excluded from Hungary's political life. Orban also reformed the security services, dissolving their old structures, and establishing a new institution, the Constitution Protection Office.

3. Media and business at Orban's service

When Fidesz took power, 90% of the media market was against it. Although these were owned by Western corporations, the socialists constructed privatization agreements in such a way as to guarantee jobs for journalists and control their management. Ownership supervision was reduced to financial matters and advertising revenues were generated by state institutions and large companies, also managed by former Kádár supporters. It turned out that the decisive factor in Orban's defeat in 2002 was the disproportion in influence in the media and having a significantly smaller budget for building party structures and running an election campaign than the post-communists had. Orban devoted his time in opposition to building media that were friendly to him and waited for the ruling party's mistakes, which were becoming more and more frequent. The media turned out to be friendly to Orban, who gained popularity after each publicized corruption scandal of the socialist government. Later, he announced the 'Hungarization' of media, using the same mechanisms as his predecessors, and he began to subjugate larger and larger areas of the media market. Orban struggled not only with an unfriendly media message but also with the supporters of previous governments located in areas crucial for the functioning of the state.

After winning the 2010 elections, Attila Chikán, the socialist-appointed president of the Hungarian National Bank, pursued a monetary policy that undermined the government's pro-demand measures aimed at increasing investment levels and

reducing unemployment. Orban used this attitude of members of the former establishment to undermine the legitimacy of opposition representatives to hold important positions in the state. He argued that, in the name of their group interests, they can act to the detriment of the public interest, Hungarian society, and the state.

4. The role of the European Commission in shaping Orban's attitudes.

"Europeanization" or pushing into the Kremlin's sphere of influence?

In addition to disavowing the efforts of the Fidesz government in the country, the opposition also took active measures to undermine Viktor Orban's position among the mainstream political circles of the European Union. It put worldview issues on the agenda of European institutions, which eventually prevailed, leading to the decision to take action against Hungary governed by Fidesz. A real risk has emerged for the success of Orban's reforms, but this has not brought the expected popularity to the opposition. The opponents of Fidesz have been accused of using external elements against the Hungarian state to strike at the country's economic foundations in the name of achieving selfish political goals and maintaining influence in the country. This was juxtaposed with the memories of the times of Kádár, who came to power supported by Soviet tanks and maintained his position thanks to an external force, the USSR. The actions of the EU were publicly compared with the influence of the Kremlin during communist rule.

5. Influence of Russia in Hungary. Real support or political cost?

The Russians withdrew from the former Comecon countries only seemingly. If the German media are to be believed, Moscow implemented the so-called Falin-Kwiciński doctrine through its network of people

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placed in the economic and political structures of the former communist party elites. This was based on the oil and gas transmission arrangement left in Russia and all industries dependent on Russian raw materials. Unable to prevent Central European people from aspiring to NATO and EU membership, it sought to exploit this fact to secure the sources of foreign currency from these countries needed to rebuild the strength of the Russian state.

The collapse of the USSR and the western orientation of the former Central European countries were treated as temporary state of affairs. “It is necessary sometimes to take one step backward to take two steps forward,” as Lenin used to say. Already in the 1990s, they stopped relying only on the personal resources of the former communist parties but were probably looking for access to newly established political circles, also anti-communist.

In Hungary, the actions of the Russian lobby may be indirectly demonstrated by the attitude of socialists who, when in power, sabotaged EU gas projects aimed at diversifying gas supplies to Europe. In 2005, the Hungarian energy company MOL sold its gas operations to the Austrian company E.ON, which is linked to Russia. In 2010, just before the election, because of pressure from the opposition (Fidesz), the then socialist government secured the purchase option for Hungarian gas operations from E.ON. In 2006, MOL (socialist government in 2002–2008) bought mining concessions in Russia for huge sums.

In February 2008, in the presence of the Hungarian Prime Minister and Vladimir Putin, a controversial agreement was signed in Moscow between Gazprom and MOL on the South Stream gas pipeline through Hungary. Socialist Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány supported the

Russian project which was in competition with the Nabucco gas pipeline, a priority undertaking for the European Union at the time. The decision was criticized by the opposition leader Viktor Orban.

In 2009, Russia’s Surgutneftegaz bought a 21.1% stake in the Hungarian oil company MOL from Austria’s OMV, to which the Hungarian government had earlier sold its MOL shares. OMV has been regarded for years as an exponent of Russian influence in the energy sector in Austria. The Hungarian public has interpreted this as an unfriendly move toward Hungary. Although Ferenc Gyurcsány’s government signed agreements to build the South Stream pipeline with Russia, and MOL negotiated with Gazprom to jointly build storage facilities, public pressure forced it to publicly criticize the acquisition of more than a fifth of the national company’s shares. The right, of course, took the opportunity to attack the government’s energy policy. According to an April 2009 publication in *Forsal*, a representative of Viktor Orban’s Fidesz party (then opposition), Zolt Németh, said that “the aim of Surgutneftegaz’s purchase of MOL shares was to gain access to information on the Nabucco pipeline project and demonstrate the superiority of Gazprom’s competing project, the South Stream pipeline.”

At that time, the Fidesz government was decidedly negative toward Russian actions concerning MOL and the acquisition of Hungarian energy assets. This was reflected in subsequent statements by its representatives and activities, both before and immediately after taking power. After Viktor Orban’s party won the election, it took intensive action to buy back the shares of Surgutneftegaz in MOL. At the same time, the Russian shareholder complained, including to the European Commission, about being blocked in MOL’s shareholding. Vitaly Kryukov,

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT FROM HUNGARY'S ELECTIONS? CONFLICTS AND DIFFICULTIES OF HUNGARIAN POLITICS



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an analyst at IFD Kapital in Moscow, commented on the events in Hungary on the Parkiet website in March 2011: “This is a unique business situation. I do not know of any other case in which a company owning more than 21% of shares in another company has no representatives on its board and is not allowed to participate in its general meeting. Surgutneftegaz bought shares in MOL two years ago and to this day the transaction has not been registered by the Hungarian authorities.” It can be said then that Orban acted very assertively.

In the end, the Orban government led to a buyout of the Russian company's shares in MOL for €1.88 billion, which was assessed by experts at the Center for Eastern Studies (OSW) as a financially satisfactory compromise for the Russian company. The independence of MOL from the

Russian capital was saved. However, the Kremlin has been looking at the situation in Hungary in the context of its dispute with the European Commission. Despite its initial negative experience with Fidesz, Russia has offered an aid package and long-term economic cooperation without clearly formulated political conditions.

Problems with obtaining budget-stabilizing funds from European Union institutions prompted Orban to accept the Russian offer. This is how Moscow's game around Fidesz-ruled Hungary began. The Russians have had experience in making politicians who previously held anti-Russian views dependent on them and using them for their own purposes. Bolesław Piasecki was an example of this in Poland. Orban, in order to stay in power, had to demonstrate his effectiveness and economic success

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to the public, and these would not have come without loans and lower prices for gas and oil, giving competitiveness to the Hungarian economy. Maintaining and increasing the number of mining concessions in Russia allowed MOL, one of the largest taxpayers in the Hungary budget, to maintain high profitability.

As long as Russia did not annex the territories of neighboring countries, this strategy could be rationally explained to the public and to the countries that support Hungary, such as Poland. A similar policy was pursued from 2008 to 2014, that is, practically until the outbreak of the Euromaidan protests, by the Polish government of the Civic Platform (PO) and the Polish People's Party (PSL). In 2013, 98% of Poland's oil imports came from Russia, and the value of Russian oil purchased by Orlen and Lotos refineries was USD 25 billion, which generated 2.5% of Russia's total budget revenues. Orban, with the help of the Russians, managed to stabilize the state's finances and return Hungary to the path of economic growth. However, Fidesz voters are not unequivocally pro-Russian, and the friendship with Putin seems to be a friendship of reason.

Let us remember that Fidesz was a categorical anti-communist organization, established as early as 1988. Its members did not let themselves be bribed with offers to participate in governments together with Kádár; they cultivated the memory of the Hungarian Spring uprising and General Józef Bem. The anticommunist Hungarians recall the crimes of the Bolsheviks, who, under the command of Bela Kun, almost gained power after World War I. Hungary was saved from Bolshevism by Poland's victory in the fight against Leninist Russia. The memory of the Hungarian Uprising of 1956 is still alive, unlike the memory of socialists whose retired mentors often participated

in legitimizing general Konev's Soviet intervention and helped the Soviets pacify Hungarian society.

The Kremlin's orders are well-remembered in Hungary. A total of 230 people were sentenced to death and executed. By 1963, Janos Kádár had pardoned most of the political prisoners, former participants in the revolution, in a series of amnesties, but at the cost of giving up their aspirations for freedom. Almost 200,000 refugees left the country after the suppression of the uprising. Some pro-independence Hungarians resented the failure of Western countries to help the rebels. During the 1956 Hungarian uprising, Allen Dulles, then head of the CIA, convinced the U.S. President that Hungary's sacrifice would benefit the United States. On October 29, 1956, an order was issued to communicate to the USSR authorities the lack of interest of Washington in the situation of Hungary. Information was passed by the American ambassador in Moscow, Charles E. Bohlen, to the Soviets that Hungary was not a military ally of the USA. This fact was later used by Hungarian communists in their anti-American propaganda. The Russians gained influence in Hungarian politics by making MOL dependent on its energy resources market, as well as by providing loans and technology in the nuclear field. Fidesz lost its vigilance and, guided by short-term profit, allowed the country's dependence on Russia to deepen. For example, he allowed long-term gas contracts (for 15 years) to be signed in 2021 bypassing Ukraine. Orban has fallen into Russia's trap. Depending on raw materials and Russian loans, Hungary must support, whether it wants to or not, the Kremlin's political projects regardless of the circumstances.

However, cooperation with Russia carries security risks for Hungary. Due to

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sanctions, it is not clear what will happen with the project to expand the Paks, the only nuclear power plant in Hungary. Located 100 kilometers from Budapest, it supplies 40% of the country's electricity needs. For now, the fuel is delivered by air.

The Kremlin is too experienced to allow itself to be used by a small country. It seems that Orban is aware that the border with Russia is not a safe scenario for Hungary, he knows history too well. Orban probably takes the position that his small country is not able to help Ukraine much anyway and lets the bigger ones, the USA, UK, Germany, and Poland, take care of it. However, this is an example of a moral hazard.

In an attempt to play its game to profit from being one of the countries uniting the West in the face of the Kremlin, Hungary wants to have its cake (maintain the border with Ukraine, do not border Russia) and eat it (make money on good relations with Russia). In his statements, Orban avoids attacking Putin but is careful not to go too far in supporting Russia in the international arena. The reason is that is well-aware that the Hungarian economy derives most of its profits from trade with the West.

In an interview with a website *mandiner.hu*, Orban admitted that Hungary would not use its veto power to block the EU's sanctions on Russia. At the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Budapest voted to exclude Russia from the group; it also supported a UN resolution condemning Russia's aggression against Ukraine. The resolution calls on Russia to "immediately, completely, and unconditionally withdraw all of its armed forces from the territory of Ukraine within its internationally recognized borders." In addition, Hungary supported

Russia's suspension from the Human Rights Council.

Russia will allow Orban to indulge in this "disloyalty" as it needs him in its game aimed at isolating Ukraine and limiting its role as a transit country. Budapest is trying to prevent the imposition of EU energy sanctions on Russia as they could mean recession for Hungary. This country is dependent on imports of energy resources from Russia, which is a consequence of the policies pursued for many years by the Hungarian governments. Budapest, acting in favor of Russia, has refused military aid to Ukraine and has even declined to allow such aid to reach Ukraine from third countries via Hungary. However, it provides humanitarian aid to refugees.

CONSEQUENCES FOR POLAND

Poland needs to watch out for Hungary, as the latter's agenda is based on self-serving and selfish reasons. Orban is taking a moral gamble counting on other countries to pay for stopping Russia and keeping it out of Hungary's borders and will continue to make money on trade with Moscow. Poland will not receive support from Hungary in a situation where this assistance will not benefit Budapest. In areas of common interest, Hungary will naturally want to cooperate with Poland.

There is a danger for Poland of the potential use of strategic Hungarian companies to infiltrate and influence important security markets, for example, energy, gas, oil, and refinery products. This is particularly relevant in the context of the activities of MOL in Poland. The lack of empathy for Ukraine's heroic struggle for its independence and freedom may be an obstacle to closer Polish-Hungarian political contacts.

Mariusz Patey ■
June 2022

WILL A PANDEMIC LIKE COVID-19 STRENGTHEN OR WEAKEN GLOBAL DEMOCRACY?

WOJCIECH ADAMCZYK

INTRODUCTION

There were very few events that changed the modern world. Among them, we can distinguish the Versailles peace conference, the Great Depression, and the fall of the Berlin Wall. The first one marked the start of the transatlantic century, with the advance of democratic, representative governance in Europe. Going further, the Great Depression caused extraordinary damage to global GDP, which fell by about 15%. Finally, the fall of the Berlin Wall marked ‘the end of history’ and the United States proclaimed itself the world’s hegemon. Undoubtedly, all of these events could be described as pivotal moments in modern history.

On December 31, 2019, representatives of the regional government in Wuhan released the information that researchers have identified a new virus that may spread throughout Asia. Several days later, the Chinese government confirmed that there was the first death caused by the novel virus. The occurrence of the virus in different parts of the world was mainly ignored or treated as a long-distance incident. Unfortunately, within three months, the new coronavirus has spread to at least 177 countries, with the death toll crossing 120,000 and sickening many more. It was time for the World Health Organization to declare the situation a pandemic.



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With the enormous economic damage that the pandemic has already caused, it is still worth asking the question of the future of world politics. Probably, the most important question that we should answer is whether the world of democracy will survive and become even stronger, or the current pandemic will mark the rise of alternative, authoritarian models of governance? The opinions vary. Below, I will try to outline the two sides of this very timely and heated public debate.

THE DAWN OF A NEW AUTHORITARIANISM

We all may agree that this huge pandemic crisis has not even reached its midpoint, and no one can decisively predict what type of consequences it will bring to the world's politics. However, hardly ever could we imagine a more

appropriate moment to begin a debate on the possible consequences of Covid-19 on international politics.

According to Michel Duclos, at first, it appears that the global system of governance has proven fragile and truly unprepared for the scale of the crisis. The world's healthcare systems are under heavy pressure, and in many situations, failing their possibly the most important exam in this century. It is widely known that all governments, democratic and authoritarian, have been independently adopting emergency measures with no visible role from major international organizations. Stephen Walt, professor of international relations at Harvard University, says that amid the spread of coronavirus, the notion of the state will strengthen, and going further, nationalism will be reinforced. What is

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more, he argues that COVID-19 will also boost the process of shifting the power and influence from West to East. Among most of the flawed Asian democracies that are helping to build a more positive outlook during the coronavirus crisis, China has taken the most aggressive approach. While the entire world has been struggling with the virus, this authoritarian regime has already declared a victory over the epidemic. This will only strengthen public trust in the government that has been doing everything to prove that China's governance model has been the most efficient in the world. It is the so-called mask diplomacy that is translated into massive medical aid provided by the Chinese government throughout the world and has the aim of promoting and exporting Chinese solutions and ideas to win the support of the international community. The first positive results of this massive diplomatic offensive have already been observed. It seems that Chinese aid was specifically recognized throughout Eastern Europe. From Belgrade, Serbia, through Budapest, Hungary, ending in Prague, Czech Republic, East European leaders praised Beijing's help. This pro-China narrative has found fertile ground, especially among populist leaders who reject further integration of the European Union members. If successful, this crisis might help aspiring strongmen in declining democracies to consolidate their power at home, and possibly, like it has been happening in Hungary, create dictatorships.

On the other hand, we can observe the rise of extreme right-wing parties across Europe. Visibly, the member states of the European Union are divided by two very opposite visions for the future of the project. The COVID-19 pandemic could be perceived as a perfect storm for those who share anti-EU sentiments. These



uncertain times might be used by the more euro-skeptical electorate to use the EU as the scapegoat, blaming it for incompetence and lack of preparedness amid the crisis. Among all V4 countries, all criticize Brussels for inaction, but Slovakia. The Czech Prime Minister Andrej Babiš has also accused the EU of an ineffective help provided to member states, while at the same time, just like Viktor Orbán praised China for its robust response. Finally, in his interview with Financial Times, French President Emmanuel Macron has warned that „if the European Union cannot band together on how to unilaterally fund a relief package for companies and individuals sickened by a global pandemic, then the EU as a ‘political



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idea' is at risk." These words may also mean the end of the Common European project, which will more likely promote more illiberal models of governance.

Last but not least, modern authoritarian regimes may use massive disinformation campaigns to weaken their perceived adversaries through the polarization of the societies. Advanced conspiracy theories may fuel debates within already conflicted nations, such as those currently in Poland, France, or Italy.

RESHAPED DEMOCRACY

There is no point to think that the world after the pandemic will remain the same. All autocratic states may use the virus to strengthen their regimes, and the

process of de-globalization might speed up. Right now, we can observe a very dramatic fight between two very different world orders. At first, the group of major economies led by the US with its 'Pax Americana' and its world dominance will do their best to preserve the democratic model of governance, while China and Russia along with new emerging powers such as India and Brazil will try to accelerate the creation of a more centralized authoritarian rule.

As COVID-19, will undoubtedly be a real test for democratic order across the world; of course, some actions can be taken to strengthen it. The first idea that plays in favor of the present global order built on democratic foundations led by

the US and its allies is to establish a new world community of technology innovation. This will also determine whether the U.S. power in the international order will be maintained and whether the Western world will win the contest with China in the 21st century.

On the other hand, leading international organizations such as the United Nations should rebuild their international response capacity thanks to the collective decision of member states and their leaders. Reengagement in world issues that support the rule of law and democratic standards should be put on the top of the agenda after economic recovery. It seems that global actors such as the European Union, the United States, and the United Kingdom should reinforce their efforts to increase the democratic standards that are cherished by all of them. There are very few people who doubt the benefits that globalization brought to the world. It has reduced poverty, for millions, provided access to education, and improved standards of living for millions of people.

Furthermore, already after a week of lockdown, we may observe some positive signs in the government's accountability. Germany may serve as a reasonable example, where lawmakers taking charge in times of crisis have proven that so far they have it under control. This example of domestic governance gives us a rough guide on how the international community embodied by international organizations should act. Overall, parliamentarians and German citizens supported the drastic measures taken by the government, and German Chancellor Angela Merkel has presented the government's strategy to confront the pandemic and made it clear that parliamentary democracy is strong enough.

Last but not least, David Runciman, a scholar at Cambridge University, states that the Western model of democratic governance is, in fact, more resilient to crises than others. In a long-running crisis, better adaptability is an advantage over authoritarian regimes because of its flexibility in addressing mistakes and introducing better policies.

CONCLUSIONS

There is no doubt that democracy is put to a strained test. Long-lasting curtailing of freedoms and economic damage may cause irreversible damage to the world that we see today. For sure, many opportunistic leaders across the world, who in nature are more authoritarian, may use the advantage and try to establish new, less democratic regimes in their countries. Data surveillance currently used to follow the development of the pandemic can one day be used against citizens. In the end, overall, democracy may be weakened even though there is no sign of danger that democratic countries will be in a minority or that the world leaders will change. It is only that liberal international order will have to take a healthy direction by regulating and attenuating the burdens of globalization. After all, the ethos of citizenship and the rule of law will have to be reinforced, and it will have to be done through multilateral cooperation and the realignment of existing alliances.

Wojciech Adamczyk ■

June 2022

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