

# INTERNATIONAL LAW AND INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS

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## THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR AND THE EUROPEAN PERSPECTIVE OF THE EASTERN PARTNERSHIP

The article analyzes the course of the Russia-Ukraine war of 2022, possible options for its development in the near future, and makes a prediction on the alleged defeat of Russia in the war and the future of Russia. The perspective of Georgia's territorial integration and its place in the future of Europe's contours and in the Euro-Atlantic structure is studied, emphasizing the connection of Georgia's foreign policy success with the great geopolitical changes in the world.

In fact, we are dealing with one of the largest military confrontations since World War II, involving up to 400,000 troops from both sides. Great casualties and losses on both sides. Both Ukrainian and especially Russian statistics are biased in this regard. According to the Ministry of Defense of Ukraine, 40 days after the start of the war, more than 18 thousand Russian soldiers (soldiers, officers, 9 generals), more than 640 tanks, 1750 armored vehicles, more than 300 artillery pieces, up to 100 rocket launchers, 55 anti-aircraft guns were destroyed. More than 1,200 vehicles and tanks, more than 135 planes, up to 150 helicopters, and up to 60 unmanned aerial vehicles were shot down, seven Russian ships and boats were sunk, and so on.

The war is still going on and may take on a protracted character. The article considers three situations that may develop depending on the course of the war: the first is Russia's military failure and economic collapse; the second option is for Russia to be able to gain a military victory over Ukraine and annex the Luhansk-Donetsk and Crimean territories to Mariupol and its surrounding areas and cut off access to them; the third option is for Russia to force the US-EU through nuclear blackmail to suspend aid to Ukraine. Everything is decided by the military, financial and human resources. The first stage of the war, ideologically and partly militarily, was won by Ukraine, which has been able to defend all major cities to date and thwarted Russia's original plans for a quick victory and full subjugation of Ukraine. The authors indicate that the fate of Georgia is decided as well because if we look at the history of Georgia, its foreign policy and cultural successes were largely related to world geopolitical changes.

**Keywords:** Georgia and Ukraine, Russian policy, Ukraine Crisis and Perspective, Eastern partnership, Russia-Ukraine war.

The Russia-Ukraine War of 2022 is a detonator of great geopolitical changes and its consequences will have a great impact on the future development of the world. Before in 2015, in an article published in *Historical Verticals* (N32), I wrote: "The Ukraine Crisis and the Preludes to World War III." That Russia's seizure of Crimea by disregard for international norms could lead to the de facto abolition of international law, anarchy, and a new world war<sup>1</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> Shubitidze, V. (2015). The Crisis in Ukraine and the Preludes to the Third World War. *Magazine "Historical Verticals"*. Tbilisi, GTU, 32.

The war started by Russia on February 24, 2022 caused a world resonance in Ukraine and no one was left indifferent to it. The war has already caused extensive damage to both military and civilian facilities, killing tens of thousands of people, with more than 3 million Ukrainians fleeing abroad, and 5 million fleeing from southeastern Ukraine, where the war is raging, to western Ukraine.

Russia's entire military plan was based on a 3-4 day blitzkrieg, a change of government in Ukraine, and the appointment of a pro-Russian government at the head of Ukraine, which would turn its back on the US-West.

The Russian army was not ready to carry out this task due to incompetent management and unpreparedness. Within a week of the start of the war, they were already facing serious problems in terms of supplies, logistics, management, and even food, hence the initial plan to occupy Ukraine failed. Vladimir Putin called the war a "special operation" aimed at denationalizing and demilitarizing Ukraine.

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The data of the Russian General Staff on the damage caused to Ukraine is even more exaggerated: 15 thousand Ukrainian servicemen were killed, 16 thousand were wounded (this is how he estimates his own loss – 1350 Russian servicemen were killed, 3825 wounded), up to 4 thousand Ukrainian military facilities were destroyed (including 71 control points and 61 radar stations), 185 planes and helicopters, 255 unmanned aerial vehicles were shot down<sup>1</sup>.

The Ukrainian people are waging a just war and bravely defending their homeland. He is assisted and sympathized with by most countries in the world except a few countries. Despite ideological unity with Russia, China has taken a neutral position and offered no serious assistance to Russia – neither monetary nor military.

The USA-EU and many other countries provided Ukraine with the largest financial (US \$ 15 billion in aid alone), military, food, medical aid, and more than 15,000 volunteers from many countries arrived in Ukraine. In the course of this war, the governments of Ukraine and, shortly after, the governments of Georgia and Moldova, wrote and submitted an application for EU membership (which Georgia intended in 2024) and submitted it, after which they will be granted EU candidate status. This war accelerated Georgia's European integration process and its rapprochement with Euro-Atlantic structures.

The war is still going on and he may take on a protracted character. Everything is decided by military, financial and human resources. The first stage of the war, ideologically and partly militarily, was won by Ukraine, which has been able to defend all major cities to date and thwarted Russia's original plans for a quick victory and full subjugation of Ukraine.

Russia's hopes of intimidating and weakening the USA-EU, NATO ultimatums were also dashed. NATO, which French President Emmanuel Macron called a deadly organization in 2019, is today, as never before, united, strengthened and stood up to the Russian aggressor.

The West immediately imposed sanctions that have never been imposed on anyone in the world. Talk on the Russian gas pipeline "North Stream – 2", which cost the Russians 10 billion dollars, was interrupted and Russia's foreign exchange reserves were seized and Russia expelled from Swift banking system. It took the USA-EU 14 years to draw the right conclusions about Russia. In the August 2008 Russia-Georgia war, they did not impose any sanctions on Russia, nor did they isolate them, which was not only a mistake but also a crime.

How can develop events in Ukraine and what impact it will have on Georgia?

Forty days after the start of the war, Russia softened its tone and issued ultimatums to Ukraine over heroic resistance by the Ukrainian army. The war became more positional – Russia sought to regroup, forcibly withdrawing them from Kyiv and Chernihov, and concentrating them on Lugansk-Donetsk and Mariupol. As noted, the Russians met unprepared for the war, running out of weapons and missiles,

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<sup>1</sup> Aladashvili, I. (2022). Military losses in Ukraine and Russia during one month of the war. *Kviris Palitra newspaper*, 13, March 28-April 3, 30.

and supplying Ukraine, and the West decided to help Ukraine with planes, tanks and lethal weapons. USA-EU seeks to defeat Russia in Ukraine and weaken it militarily and economically, however, there is a certain risk that Putin will use tactical nuclear charges against Ukraine. Probably less likely, as NATO has said it would strike an adequate retaliatory strike on Russia. In fact, no one knows how a paranoid, humiliated Russian leader who could lose power in a war would be disastrous for him and his illegally enriched entourage. Soon, depending on the course of the war, the following situations may develop:

The first is Russia's military failure and economic collapse. This will undoubtedly affect the further fate of Russia. Inflation due to military failure and severe sanctions, unemployment, rising prices, restrictions on exports and imports can lead to dissatisfaction of the population and taking to the streets. In such a situation, a change of government and civil strife are expected in Russia. USA-EU not going to lift sanctions on Russia until Russian troops withdraw from Ukraine, Sukhumi-Tskhinvali, Transnistria, Crimea and Donbas. In this case, it is expected that the territorial integrity of Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine will be restored peacefully and their accelerated movement towards Euro-Atlantic structures will be accompanied by internal reform and an increase in the degree of democracy.

The second option is for Russia to be able to gain a military victory over Ukraine and annex the Luhansk-Donetsk and Crimean territories to Mariupol and its surrounding areas and cut off access to them. At this stage, Russia is trying to implement this option and is concentrating its troops in this direction.

The third option is for Russia to force the US-EU through nuclear blackmail to suspend aid to Ukraine, after which it may then be able to subdue it, overthrow the government there and pull it out of Western orbit, forcibly suppress Ukraine's Euro-Atlantic aspirations, and turn its back on Russia.

If we take into account that Russia is currently facing most of the world's leading countries, then the chances of implementing the second and, especially, the third option are only 25-30%, because Russia is literally running out of military-economic resources.

Also, the fate of Georgia in the future in Ukraine and the future of the world will be decided. If we look at the history of Georgia, its foreign policy and cultural successes were largely related to world geopolitical changes.

At the turn of the 4th-3rd centuries BC, the success of King Parnavaz was connected with the collapse of the empire of Alexander the Great. The emergence of Georgian kingdoms and the emergence of a united Georgian state was linked to the weakening of the Arabs and the resulting political vacuum. The success of David the Builder (1089-1125) was linked to the capture of Jerusalem by the European crusaders in 1099 and the opening of a second front for the Seljuk Turks. (This was immediately followed by David's cessation of tribute to them and their gradual expulsion from Georgia);

George V the Magnificent (1318-1346)'s great success was associated with the weakening and weakening of the Mongol state; The successes of Erekle II (1744-1798) and Solomon I (1752-1784) were associated with the weakening and economic decline of the Iranian-Turkish empires. The same can be repeated today. By all logic, Russia, which is opposed to the whole world, must be defeated and strengthened in every way. There is a historic chance that Georgia, only in a peaceful way, with the support of the West, will regain its jurisdiction over Abkhazia and the so-called On South Ossetia, which historically belonged to him. But Russia took them from Georgia and formally recognized them as independent. Georgia should become not so much a transit corridor (this is only one aspect of economic activity), but a bridge, a hub connecting the West and the East, because we are both a Western (European) country and an Eastern (Asian) country. This would be both Georgia's geopolitical function and its place in the world to come.

The current situation has further convinced us of the truth of the words of the political leader of independent Georgia (1918-1921), Prime Minister Noe Jordania. "The transfer of our future to the future of Russia means our complete destruction not only politically and nationally, but also physically.

Democracy can not fall from the bridge of Bolshevism. This is a distant stage. That is why we want Georgia to get rid of these Russian experiments in time, to restore its sovereignty and move forward in its own way. The Georgian nation must finally join the European family"<sup>1</sup>.

Noah Jordan's prophecy that "either Europe must be overthrown or Russia must be Europeanized" may also come true ... but "Russia has no chance of overthrowing Europe"<sup>2</sup>.

<sup>1</sup> Jordania, N. (1923). *Issues of Struggle*. Paris, 25.

<sup>2</sup> Jordania, N. (1924). *We and They*. Paris, 29-30.

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