



POLICY PAPER

ACCELERATOR FOR A GEOPOLITICAL EUROPE

POTENTIAL IMPACT OF UKRAINE'S MEMBERSHIP ON EU FOREIGN,
SECURITY, AND DEFENCE POLICY

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INTRODUCTION

The EU has embarked on a new eastward enlargement at the time of a major breaking point in European and international order. In Europe, the post-Cold War order has been broken by Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and efforts to build a common European order with Russia have evidently failed. On the global scale, the era of American hegemony has been overtaken by harsh great power competition, with China as the main rival to the US.¹ The rules-based order and UN-based international system that has its roots in the post-WWII settlement are cracking under unprecedented pressure. Competition between multiple centres of power is arguably constituting a multi-order world.² Interdependencies between states are complex and multiple, but the expectation that they would contribute to international security has been replaced with an understanding that connectivity has actually increased tensions and is used as a tool of influence in great power competition.³

The EU's foreign, security, and defence policy has already experienced a remarkable change as a result of the war in Ukraine. The Union has taken new steps in the direction of becoming a geopolitical power, as it has strongly supported Ukraine and engaged in a geopolitical battle with Russia over not only the future of Ukraine but the future of European order. The EU's

contribution to Ukraine's war effort has been primarily civilian, including extensive sanctions against Russia and political and economic support to Ukraine.

However, military assistance has also been significant and growing – the total support of the EU and member states to Ukraine since February 2022 amounts to EUR 82.6 billion, including more than EUR 25 billion in military aid.⁴ The European Peace Facility has been mobilised as the main tool of collective support for Ukraine's fight. The war has given a boost to the development of EU defence, notably capability development and strengthening of the European defence industry, as member states have struggled to provide sufficient support to Ukraine and refill their stocks. After years of futile talk, defence spending of European states is finally increasing (albeit slowly, with only nine member states expected to reach the NATO target of spending 2 % of GDP on defence in 2023), and there is a great need for EU-level incentives, coordination, and joint action.

In this global and regional context, EU enlargement to Ukraine (and other candidate countries) has major geopolitical significance.

There is no demand on Ukraine to do reforms since it is already well aligned with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and has contributed to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP)

In the discussions about the potential impact of Ukraine's accession on the EU itself, much focus has been on budgetary and institutional matters, where internal reform is required but its content is contested among member states.⁵ In the field of foreign, security, and defence policy, there is no similar pressure for internal reform, apart from the procedural question of extending qualified majority vote in the decision-making. There is no demand on

¹ See Jake Sullivan, "[The Sources of American Power](#)," *Foreign Affairs*, 24 October 2023.

² Trine Flockhart and Elena A. Korosteleva, "[War in Ukraine: Putin and the Multi-Order World](#)," *Contemporary Security Policy*, Vol 43, Issue 3 (June 2022): 466-81.

³ Mark Leonard, *The Age of Unpeace: How Connectivity Causes Conflict* (2021).

⁴ "[Factsheet: EU solidarity with Ukraine](#)," European Commission, 13 November 2023.

⁵ Michael Emerson, "[The Potential Impact of Ukrainian Accession on the EU's Budget – and the Importance of Control Valves](#)," *ICDS*, 25 September 2023; Steven Blockmans, "[The Impact of Ukrainian Membership on the EU's Institutions and Internal Balance of Power](#)," *ICDS*, 9 November 2023.

Ukraine to do reforms since it is already well aligned with the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP) and has contributed to the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP), and the Association Agreement has provided the framework for close cooperation in this field.

Yet it is obvious that Ukraine's accession will bring about substantial changes in the EU's policies and international clout. As has been often repeated, the size and geopolitical weight of the Union will considerably grow. Like any other member state, Ukraine will bring to the Union its foreign and security policy priorities, resources, and concerns, thus shifting the balance and priorities of the EU. In particular, Ukraine's experience of war, its threat perceptions, its battle-hardened army, and its fast-growing defence industrial capacity will make a real difference.

This paper presents a preliminary analysis of how Ukraine's accession might change EU foreign, security, and defence policy, looking at relations with Russia; transatlantic relations, NATO, and defence; the approach to rules-based multilateralism; the so-called Global South; and China.

1. RUSSIA

The history of Russian-Ukrainian relations, and Ukraine itself, has been predominantly told from the Russian perspective, even in the west. However, one of the consequences of the ongoing war is that the history of Ukraine, called the "gates of Europe" by one of the most prominent Ukrainian historians Serhii Plokhy, has become a topic of interest in its own right.⁶ It is also an important clue to envisaging Ukraine's future role in EU-Russia relations.

After having been a meeting point of several empires over centuries, in the 20th century most of the historical territories of Ukraine came under Soviet domination, while the identity of the Ukrainian nation was heavily suppressed by Russification policies. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Russia

did not abandon its wish to maintain its sphere of influence in Ukraine (and other post-Soviet states). Up to the Orange Revolution of 2004, the foreign policy of Ukraine was oscillating between an eastern and western orientation. From 2004 onwards, Ukraine's European aspirations strengthened and its relationship with the EU gradually became closer. At the same time, Moscow became increasingly concerned about "losing Ukraine" and developed hardening measures to keep Kyiv under its control.

Not only has Moscow wished to maintain Ukraine in its sphere of influence, but Putin has repeatedly denied the very existence of Ukraine as a state and nation, claiming it to be part of one Russian nation. This view was most clearly articulated in Putin's televised address to the nation on 21 February 2022, three days prior to the full-scale invasion, in which he explicitly withdrew Russia's recognition of Ukraine as an independent nation.⁷ Once the invasion started, it was evident to the Ukrainians that they were in an existential fight against Russia. Public support for the country's western orientation rose to unprecedented levels, with approximately eight in ten Ukrainians supporting membership in both the EU and NATO.⁸ The brutality and terror exercised by Russia have further reinforced the determination of Ukrainians to go their own way. In the meantime, Russia has portrayed its war against Ukraine as a war against the west, NATO, and the US, consistently denying the agency of Ukrainians.

Thus, the development of Ukraine as a sovereign state with a distinct national identity and independent foreign policy has faced pervasive and aggressive countermeasures

It is hard to foresee anything but an antagonistic relationship between Russia and Ukraine for many years to come

by Russia, which will shape the views of Ukrainians for generations. On the Russian side, the conviction that Ukraine, historically and culturally, "belongs" to Russia is also likely

⁶ Serhii Plokhy, *The Gates of Europe: A History of Ukraine* (Basic Books, 2021).

⁷ President of Russia, "[Address by the President of the Russian Federation](#)," Kremlin, 21 February 2022.

⁸ "[National Survey of Ukraine \(IRI\): October 2023 - Ukraine - Research](#)," Rating Group, 27 October 2023.

to persist beyond the war. It is hard to foresee anything but an antagonistic relationship between Russia and Ukraine for many years to come. Even if, at some point, a sincere wish to normalise relations may emerge on both sides, rebuilding trust will take decades.

Irrespective of Ukraine's future membership, Russia's aggression against Ukraine will cast a long shadow over EU-Russia relations, where trust has also been lost and will take a long time to restore. Ukraine's accession will strengthen the group of eastern member

Ukraine's accession will strengthen the group of eastern member states that will oppose any possible premature attempts to normalise the Union's relations with Russia after the war

states that will oppose any possible premature attempts to normalise the Union's relations with Russia after the war. From the viewpoint of the EU's eastern members, Russia would have to profoundly change to a post-imperial and democratic state before it is possible to build truly good-neighbourly relations. Such fundamental change will certainly not happen fast, if at all, no matter who will be the next leaders of Russia. Possibly, Russia will be entering a period of domestic instability after the war against Ukraine, which will pose risks to the EU such as tensions at borders and migration pressure.

Ukraine, Poland, and the Baltic states, possibly supported by other central and northern European countries, will most likely insist on maintaining sanctions targeted at the military sector and dual-use technology. They will be suspicious of rebuilding economic and business ties and wish to avoid any restoration of energy dependence on Russia. Likewise, they will pursue their demands to make Russia bear responsibility for the war crimes committed in Ukraine and compensate for the war damage. They will also insist on the EU's long-term commitment to strengthening Europe's resilience and its contribution to collective defence and deterrence vis à vis the Russian threat.

With Ukraine's accession, the length of the EU-Russia land border will almost double from the current 2 250 km. This will bring new security challenges, but Ukraine's membership will also make the Union more capable of managing the Russian threat due to the Ukrainian military capability and resilience. Importantly, the grey zone between the EU and Russia, which has been marred by instability and conflicts, will almost disappear, and the geopolitical ambiguity that has been inherent in western policy towards Ukraine will be replaced with clarity regarding Ukraine's place in Europe.

It is difficult to foresee the developments in Belarus by the time of Ukraine's EU accession. However, there is a chance that Moscow's grip on Minsk will loosen in the context of possible domestic instability in Russia. In that case, a democratic and pro-European transition in Belarus is a scenario that the EU should be prepared for. Such transformation in Belarus would be encouraged by Ukraine's example of integration into the EU and strongly supported by Belarus' neighbours in the EU. Yet, it is also possible that Belarus will remain a despotic regime under Russia's control, which will enhance the Russian threat to the EU.

The war in Ukraine has exposed the dependence of European security on the US

2. TRANSATLANTIC RELATIONS, NATO, AND DEFENCE

The war in Ukraine has exposed the dependence of European security on the US. Americans reluctantly took the leading role in military support to Kyiv after Russia started mobilising its troops along Ukraine's borders in 2021. This came after efforts during the presidency of Barack Obama (2009-17) to push the Europeans to take the lead, and the uncertainty hanging over US commitment to European security during the presidency of Donald Trump (2017-21). During the first year of full-scale war, US support to Ukraine was higher than the total of EU and member states' support. The size of European commitments

surpassed those of the US in the summer of 2023, but the EU maintained the view that it would not be able to replace the US contribution to Ukraine.⁹ Ukrainians have also regarded the US role as decisive; furthermore, the UK has played a major role.¹⁰ At the same time, though, they have been frustrated over the cautious step-by-step approach of the US, as well as many European states, caused, above all, by fear of escalation. This has meant delays in important arms deliveries, which have prolonged the war and increased human casualties and destruction in Ukraine. The mix of gratitude and frustration of Ukraine towards western partners will complicate relations also after the war.

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The war has clarified and reshaped the complementary roles of the EU and NATO in European defence. NATO has clearly returned to its traditional key task of collective defence, as highlighted at the summits in Madrid (2022) and Vilnius (2023). The EU has neither intention nor capability to take over this responsibility from NATO – which has always been the case but perhaps has become more evident due to the war. At the same time, NATO has been keen to make sure that it does not become a party to the war and has, therefore, provided limited support to Ukraine, leaving the job of arming Ukraine to individual NATO countries and the EU.

While Ukraine has been disappointed at the role of NATO during the war, this sentiment has not reduced its determination to pursue NATO membership. This is based on the realisation that, in the long term, Ukraine will need security guarantees after the war. Kyiv sees membership in NATO as the most credible

and efficient guarantee – a view that is strongly supported by its central and eastern European partners. Interestingly, France had come out in support of Ukraine's NATO accession prior to the Vilnius Summit, where the issue was hotly debated.¹¹ It might be interpreted as an acknowledgement that Ukraine will, indeed, require credible security guarantees, which Europe will not be able to provide without relying on US capabilities. It is necessary to repair the flawed western policy that entails concrete progress towards Ukraine's EU membership, without having backed it up with a clear path to NATO accession thus far.

The EU has promised Ukraine its “security commitments,” which will “help Ukraine defend itself in the long term, deter acts of aggression and resist destabilisation efforts.”¹² Yet, limitations in European stocks, as well as production capacity, have become a serious concern, considering Ukraine's immediate as well as long-term needs, while efforts to boost the European defence industry have not advanced fast enough. In March 2023, the EU took a landmark decision on joint procurement of ammunition and promised to provide Ukraine with one million shells within a year. By November, it had delivered approximately 300 000 and was struggling to enhance production in order to reach the

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one million target.¹³ Meanwhile, Ukraine was launching 9 000 shells per day.¹⁴ The contribution that the EU can make to NATO's collective defence and deterrence vis à vis Russia is obviously particularly important for Ukraine, and it is clear that more is needed.

⁹ “Ukraine Support Tracker: Europe clearly overtakes US, with total commitments now twice as large,” Kiel Institute for the World Economy, 7 September 2023; Nicholas Vinocur, Clea Caulcutt, and Sarah Anne Aarup, “EU to US: Help, we can't cope without you on Ukraine,” *POLITICO*, 5 October 2023. Joint Research Papers No 20 (April 2023).

¹⁰ Kristi Raik, Steven Blockmans, Assem Dandashly, Gergana Noutcheva, Anna Osypchuk, and Anton Suslov, “Tackling the Constraints on EU Foreign Policy towards Ukraine: From Strategic Denial to Geopolitical Awakening,” Joint Research Papers No 20 (April 2023).

¹¹ David Cadier and Martin Quencez, “France's Policy Shift on Ukraine's NATO Membership,” *War on the Rocks*, 10 August 2023.

¹² European Council, *European Council Conclusions Ukraine Security Defence* (Brussels: European Council, 29 June 2023).

¹³ Joshua Posaner, “Europe can't keep its promise to Ukraine, defense chief admits,” *POLITICO*, 15 November 2023.

¹⁴ Joshua Posaner, Veronika Melkozerova, Laura Kayali, Jacopo Barigazzi, and Caleb Larson, “North Korea sends Putin tons of ammo. Europe can't do the same for Ukraine,” *POLITICO*, 2 November 2023.

The Commission is preparing a European Defence Industrial Plan and a longer-term approach to joint capability development and procurement.

Hence, the EU is playing an increasingly important complementary role to NATO's task of collective defence. The focus of both the EU and NATO has shifted from external crisis management to European defence, reflecting major changes in the security environment. The latest strategic documents of both organisations define Russia as the most significant threat to European security. While laudable, the EU's first attempt at aligning member states' strategic cultures has not yet resulted in a trustworthy "Strategic Compass." The EU's mutual defence clause (Article 42.7 TEU) may very well foresee solidarity and mutual assistance among member states, but it is not – and for the foreseeable future will not be – backstopped by the kind of collective defence doctrine and structures that NATO possesses.

Ukraine can be expected to remain a keen supporter of continued US commitment to European security even as an EU member

Based on its wartime experience, Ukraine can, therefore, be expected to remain a keen supporter of continued US commitment to European security even as an EU member. At the same time, Kyiv is acutely aware that the future of US commitment to European security is by no means certain. The possibility of a second Trump presidency is looming on the

Ukraine has an obvious interest in strengthening European defence capability and is already making an important contribution itself

horizon, but even if it does not materialise, the US will continue to push Europe to take on a bigger burden for its own defence.

Ukraine has an obvious interest in strengthening European defence capability and is already making an important contribution itself. The war has turned the Ukrainian military into one of the strongest in Europe and obviously the

most combat-experienced one. Ukrainian drone manufacturing has exhibited exponential growth since the start of the full-scale war; now, the country is enhancing domestic production of artillery munition. Ukraine has concluded 20 agreements with western companies for cooperation and joint production.¹⁵ For instance, a joint venture with the German Rheinmetall in Kyiv initially focuses on the maintenance of military vehicles, soon to be followed by joint production.¹⁶ There are also significant cooperation plans with French, British, and Polish companies.¹⁷ It is in the EU's long-term interest to support further strengthening of Ukraine's defence industry and engage it in European cooperation, without waiting for Ukraine's EU accession.¹⁸

Apart from military defence, Ukraine has also gained valuable experience, in the most tragic manner, in countering Russian hybrid attacks. Ukraine has withstood extensive attacks in the cyber sphere, disinformation, and targeting of critical infrastructure, as well as other attempts to paralyse and destabilise society and break its willingness to fight. The degree of resilience in Ukrainian society has been remarkable. The EU, NATO, and western countries have a lot to learn from the hybrid activities of Russia and Ukrainian responses. Countering hybrid threats will be an important part of the EU's security agenda and EU-NATO cooperation, where Ukraine's participation will bring real added value.

While the focus of EU defence has shifted away from crisis management, the EU will continue to conduct CSDP missions and operations in future. Ukraine will likely be both able and willing to make a substantial contribution, building on its past experience of cooperation. Ukraine sent peacekeepers to the EU Police Mission in Bosnia and

¹⁵ Alec Russell and Christopher Miller, "[Ukraine's race to build its own arms industry](#)," *Financial Times*, 24 October 2023.

¹⁶ "[Support for Ukraine: Rheinmetall AG and Ukrainian Defense Industry JSC establish joint venture in Kyiv](#)," Rheinmetall, 24 October 2023.

¹⁷ Margaryta Khvostova and Dmytro Kryvosheiev, "[The art of defence: Why the West should help Ukraine grow its military industry](#)," *ECFR*, 26 October 2023.

¹⁸ Pierre Haroche, "[Ukraine's EU accession will be tricky - but start with defence](#)," *EU Observer*, 6 November 2023.

Herzegovina (EUPM BiH) already in 2003. It also contributed to Operation Atalanta (European Union Naval Force, EU NAVFOR), launched in 2008 to fight piracy off the coast of Somalia, and participated in EU Battlegroups.¹⁹ As the international security environment has become more volatile due to hardened geopolitical competition, there will likely be a demand for the EU to conduct operations in more hostile conditions. The impact of geopolitical competition in various crisis situations has been visible, for example, in the Sahel, where Europe has been confronted with Russian paramilitary groups such as Wagner. The Ukrainian military will obviously be preoccupied with national defence in the coming years, but it will potentially offer a valuable addition to EU operations in demanding conditions.

3. RULES-BASED GLOBAL ORDER, THE GLOBAL SOUTH, AND RELATIONS WITH CHINA

Ukraine's integration into the EU would not only strengthen the Union as a geopolitical player but also bolster its commitment to upholding international norms and promoting a rules-based global order.

Ukraine's tumultuous journey towards EU membership demonstrates both parties' dedication to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law

First and foremost, Ukraine's accession would send a powerful signal that the EU remains committed to extending its community of norms and values through peaceful means. Ukraine's tumultuous journey towards EU membership demonstrates both parties' dedication to democracy, human rights, and the rule of law. This commitment aligns closely with the EU's broader stance on rules-based multilateralism, which seeks to foster

cooperation and stability through a system of international rules and institutions. This goes as much for issues of peace and security as for economic matters. In the first basket would fall examples such as the mutual assistance in proceedings against Russia before the International Court of Justice (ICJ) and prosecutorial action in support of the International Criminal Court (ICC). As an illustration of alignment to economic rights and procedures, one could cite the fact that Ukraine opted to file a complaint to the World Trade Organisation (WTO) in order to resolve a dispute that had emerged over its grain exports to and through neighbouring EU countries.

Secondly, Ukraine's membership would significantly enhance the EU's presence in Eastern Europe, a region where Russia's actions have challenged the basic principles of rules-based multilateralism (i.e., non-use of force, the inviolability of international borders, respect for internal matters of another state, etc.). The EU, by incorporating Ukraine, would be able to exert more influence over developments in the remaining Eastern Partnership region and strengthen its position in conflict resolution efforts.

Thirdly, this might enable the EU to assert its commitment to multilateralism and international law by helping resolve regional disputes and fostering peaceful coexistence on a broader international scale. Ukraine's accession to the European Union will reinforce a rules-based European security order, even if Russia is not likely to be part of that order in the foreseeable future.²⁰ It will also provide the EU with a chance

to enhance its image in the eyes of the so-called Global South. Ukraine will bring to the EU its experience of engaging the Global South in discussions on Ukraine's plan for peace.²¹ President Zelenskyy has emphasised the global relevance of his ten-point peace plan and Ukraine's ambition to contribute to ending other wars and reforming the UN

¹⁹ For an overview, see: Madalina Dobrescu, "Explaining third-country participation in CSDP missions: the case of the association trio – Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova," *European Security* Vol 32, Issue 4 (April 2023).

²⁰ Kristi Raik and Eero Kristijan Sild, *Europe's Broken Order and the Prospect of a New Cold War* (Tallinn: ICDS, October 2023).

²¹ 65 countries participated in the latest peace formula talks in Malta in October, see: "Malta hosts two-day Ukraine peace formula talks," *Euronews/AP*, 29 October 2023.

Security Council.²² The peace plan endorses the principles of the UN Charter, such as respect for the territorial integrity and political independence of any state, and addresses global concerns such as nuclear safety and food security.²³

The European Union's image in the Global South has suffered due to perceived double standards in its approach to the war in Ukraine and Israel's military operations against Hamas. Many countries in the region view these conflicts through a post-colonial lens, raising questions about whether the EU's responses are driven by historical and geopolitical

Ukraine's accession aligns with the decolonisation principles of supporting nations in their quest for self-governance and equitable representation on the international stage

alliances or a genuine commitment to apply decolonisation principles and international law across different geographies. By admitting Ukraine, the EU will demonstrate its commitment to embracing a country that has fought to defend its right to sovereignty and self-determination and broken away from Russian neo-colonial influences that have lingered since the Cold War. This aligns with the decolonisation principles of supporting nations in their quest for self-governance and equitable representation on the international stage. To foster more trust and cooperation with countries in the Global South, the EU will have to impartially apply the same principles elsewhere – which, of course, should not change support for Israel's right to defend itself and condemnation of Hamas as a terrorist organisation.

Finally, the prospect of Ukrainian membership may hold significant implications for the EU's relations with China, yet future dynamics in

²² Volodymyr Zelenskyy, "[The Ukrainian Formula provides for fair peace, therefore it has universal benefit for the world](#)," Official website of the President of Ukraine, 28 June 2023.

²³ "[What is Zelenskyy's peace 10-point peace plan?](#)" War in Ukraine, accessed in November 2023.

this field are affected by many other regional and global (f)actors that are hard to foresee. Both the EU and Ukraine have been willing to keep China involved in Ukraine's peace discussions. At the same time, they have been watching, with concern, the strengthening of the partnership between Beijing and Moscow. China's future role in the peace process and the degree of its support to Russia will influence the relationship between the enlarged EU and China.

Ukraine's view on China, like that of other European countries, has shifted from a keen interest in Chinese investments and economic cooperation to increased awareness of the risks caused by dependencies on China and efforts to reduce those.²⁴ Ukraine has learned from the experience of a major Chinese investment in the strategically significant aircraft engine manufacturer Motor Sich in 2017. National security considerations, notably concern about the transfer of critical technologies and capabilities to China, eventually led Ukraine to freeze the deal, seize the assets, and nationalise the company.²⁵

The strengthening of the EU's geopolitical weight and influence in eastern Europe may tighten competition with China which

The EU and Ukraine will have a strong interest in carefully managing the risks and avoiding Chinese involvement in strategically important sectors

has undertaken several infrastructure and connectivity projects in the region. China will definitely be interested in investing in post-war reconstruction in Ukraine. Therefore, the EU and Ukraine will have a strong interest in carefully managing the risks and avoiding Chinese involvement in strategically important sectors.

²⁴ Mykola Kapitonenko and Yehor Kyian, "[Building A Policy Towards China in Central and Eastern Europe. Cases of Poland, Romania, Lithuania and Latvia. Lessons from Chinese-Ukrainian Relations](#)," International Centre for Policy Studies, 2023.

²⁵ Lukas Fiala, "[PAS 2023: Motor Sich's Balancing Act with China](#)," European Security & Defence, 27 June 2023.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As noted above, Russia's war against Ukraine has already had a major impact on the EU's foreign, security, and defence policy and, most evidently, its relations with Russia and its eastern neighbours. Another closely related strategic change is underway in the field of EU defence. Ukraine's accession will reinforce the strengthening of EU defence and solidify the Union's contribution to deterring and managing the long-term Russian threat. At the same time, NATO remains the organisation responsible for the collective defence of most EU member states, so Ukraine's accession to the EU will need to be backed up by NATO membership and the security guarantees provided by the Alliance. The inclusion of Ukraine in both the EU and NATO entails a great potential to stabilise the security situation in eastern Europe.

Furthermore, enlargement will make the EU a stronger actor in the world of great power competition, and not only because of its then-bigger size. Completion of such a geopolitical enlargement will enhance the EU's credibility as a security actor, whereas a failure to do so would show the EU's weakness and inability to influence even the regional security environment. The EU's ability to reshape and reinforce the rules-based global order will be strengthened by the accession of a country that has defended core international norms against unlawful and unjustified aggression.

Ukraine has already become a game-changer in European politics and security. The brave fight of Ukrainians against Russian aggression

and be not only a firm supporter of maintaining the US commitment to European security but also a major contributor to the strengthening of Europe's strategic sovereignty.

The EU, together with Ukraine, should advance Ukraine's accelerated integration and successful contribution to the EU's foreign, security, and defence policy by working on the following priorities:

- Develop EU foreign, security, and defence policy with a view to strengthening its ability to manage the long-term Russian threat and engage Ukraine as an asset;
- Move ahead with EU and NATO enlargements as parallel processes in order to provide Ukraine with credible security guarantees after the war;
- Foster EU-NATO cooperation in the field of capability development with a view to long-term support to Ukraine and enhancing European defence capability;
- Support Ukraine's defence industry, its cooperation with companies of EU member states, and thus its accelerated integration already in the pre-accession stage;
- Learn the lessons from Ukraine's resilience in countering hybrid attacks;
- Assist Ukraine's efforts to engage the Global South to discuss the Ukrainian peace plan, which entails an ambition to strengthen international security and rules-based order.

Enlargement will make the EU a stronger actor in the world of great power competition

has elevated the country to one of the major powers in Europe, especially in terms of military capability. As an EU member, Ukraine will most likely aspire to have a strong voice in defining the EU's regional and global agenda. Ukraine can be expected to pursue a principled, hard line vis à vis Russia together with other eastern member states; act as an ambitious defender and reformer of the global rules-based order;

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