

# DEFENSE SECURITY BRIEF

01

THE REAL "GAME CHANGER" – IMPLICATIONS OF THE UKRAINE WAR

Tzu-Li Wu

07

WHY DID RUSSIA'S HYBRID WARFARE FAIL IN ITS INVASION OF UKRAINE 2022?

Tsung-Han Wu

17

DEFENDING THE ECONOMY: RUSSIA'S EXPERIENCE OF COUNTERING EU SANCTIONS IN 2022

Charles CJ Wang

27

ON THE VARIABLES IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

Shiau-Shyang Liou

35

HOW TO CREATE A MORE EFFECTIVE ARMY: LESSONS FROM THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

Yurii Poita



## **THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY RESEARCH (INDSR)**

The Institute for National Defense and Security Research (INDSR) is dedicated to fueling knowledge-based policy analyses and strategic assessments on Taiwan's security. Our mission is to safeguard Taiwan's democracy and prosperity by strengthening mutual understanding and advancing common interests in the defense and security community both domestically and internationally. INDSR was formally inaugurated on May 1, 2018, and is headquartered in Taipei, Taiwan. We are an independent, nonpartisan, nonprofit organization.

To bring together great minds in policymaking, industry and research, we convene international forums, network civil societies, engage in Track Two dialogue and conduct wargame simulations. INDSR's dynamic research agenda and activities are used to develop pragmatic policy recommendations for the Taiwan government.

### **LEADERSHIP**

*Shoou-Yeh Huoh* (Chairman)

*Ming-Chi Chen* (President)

### **DEFENSE SECURITY BRIEF**

*Defense Security Brief (DSB)* is an English-language publication aimed at strengthening research exchanges with security-related experts both domestically and abroad. Established in 2011, DSB was originally founded and compiled by the Office of Defense Studies, Ministry of National Defense. INDSR continued the publication in 2018.

### **EDITORS**

*Ming-Shih Shen* (Editor-in-Chief)

*Tsung-Han Wu* (Associate Editor)

### **OFFICE**

Institute for National Defense and Security Research

No.172, Bo-Ai Road, Zhongzheng Dist., Taipei City, Taiwan (R.O.C.)

Tel: 886-2-2331-2360 Ext.705 | Fax: 886-2-2331-2361

Printed in Taiwan

ISSN 2225360-2

**COPYRIGHT © 2023 THE INSTITUTE FOR NATIONAL DEFENSE AND SECURITY RESEARCH**



# THE REAL “GAME CHANGER” – IMPLICATIONS OF THE UKRAINE WAR

*Tzu-Li Wu*

## INTRODUCTION

It has been more than one year since Russia’s invasion of Ukraine; the Ukrainian leadership has pushed for more advanced weapons from the West and has repeatedly highlighted the need as a “game changer.” Defense analysts from all sides have debated whether the conflict shows a major change in the nature of war from the perspective of “article,” “event,” and “person.” Starting from the definition of “game changer”, this article explores the possible “game changer” entities presented during the Russo-Ukraine war, and examines the views of various parties on “game change” to discuss the implications of what a real game changer should be.

## DEFINING “GAME CHANGER”

“Game changer” refers to something completely new and different. It completely turns the traditional rules of the game in its field. This field could be technological, or an innovative idea, or a new development in way of dealing things, or any innovation that changes the rules of a play. “Game changer” is a neologism that has been in use since the late 1980s and early 1990s. The Oxford English Dictionary (OED) included this idiom in 1992. It must be noted that there is no hyphen between game and changer, and only the related adjective “game-changing” has a hyphen, which means “to change the outcome of the game; to change or to subvert the traditional rules of the game; to change or to subvert the traditional norms of behavior.” This article focuses on “game changer” rather than that of the “game-changing.”

“Game changer” was originally a sports term meaning “the person (or thing) that changes the outcome of a game,” and was later adopted by the business community to mean “someone who changes or subverts the traditional rules of the game; people







For any party participating in a game, it is the ultimate goal of the contestants to find ways to make the game turn in their favor and to win. “Game changer” needs to be viewed from the perspective of “consequence theory”, and may be more appropriate from the perspective of Sun Tzu’s “achieve success by a surprise move with original ideas” [出奇制勝] in the Art of War.

※

Dr. Tzu-Li Wu is an Associate Research Fellow at Division of Defense Strategy and Resources, INDSR. His research interests include Military Operations Research, Defense Strategy, Defense Industry, and Defense Affair.

※





# WHY DID RUSSIA'S HYBRID WARFARE FAIL IN ITS INVASION OF UKRAINE 2022?

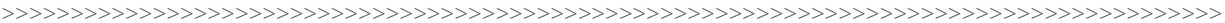
*Tsung-Han Wu*

## INTRODUCTION

The Russian invasion (Vladimir Putin termed it a “special military operation”) of Ukraine since February 24, 2022, has been ongoing for more than a year. Despite the fact that the end is not yet in sight, it is clear that the war scenario has not evolved according to Putin’s initial plan. Over the past months, the firm resistance and resilience of the Ukrainians have offered valuable lessons and inspired many who are fighting against authoritarian regimes, including people of Taiwan. At the same time, the war is also being closely examined by revisionists seeking to reshape the global order, including China.

Analyzing its successful annexation of Crimea in 2014, existing literature reveals that Moscow’s triumph at the time was a result of hybrid warfare tactics. Many analysts have observed that Russia adopted a similar approach towards Ukraine in 2022; however, the Russian effort did not yield the same result. This discrepancy has created an academic gap that this paper aims to address.<sup>1</sup>

This paper argues that, from a theoretical standpoint, hybrid warfare is disruptive due to its nature of employing indirect approaches and non-military actions to menace. However, once Moscow launched a full-scale invasion, the military actions significantly compromised the advantages of hybrid warfare. Furthermore, in 2022, Russia found it difficult to replicate its successful tactics involving disinformation and



<sup>1</sup> “What is hybrid war, and is Russia waging it in Ukraine?,” *The Economist*, February 22, 2022, <https://www.economist.com/the-economist-explains/2022/02/22/what-is-hybrid-war-and-is-russia-waging-it-in-ukraine>; Weilong Kong and Tim Marler, “Ukraine’s Lessons for the Future of Hybrid Warfare,” *The Nationalist Interest*, November 25, 2022, <https://nationalinterest.org/feature/ukraine%E2%80%99s-lessons-future-hybrid-warfare-205922>.



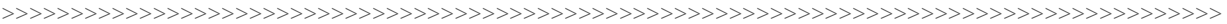
economic, military, civil, or information.<sup>4</sup>

In another place, NATO suggests that hybrid warfare “entails an interplay or fusion of conventional as well as unconventional instruments of power and tools of subversion” in which “instruments or tools are blended in a synchronized manner to exploit the vulnerabilities of an antagonist and achieve synergistic effects.” Arguably, hybrid warfare is often launched below the threshold of war and avoids overt military attack. With its resulting uncertainties, the adversary is then easily confused and fails to react in a timely way.<sup>5</sup>

The so called “Gerasimov Doctrine” is a classic theory of Russian hybrid warfare. From the Russian viewpoint, many cases of regime change in the post-Soviet era were in fact related to the US and West; these cases included the NATO’s Yugoslavia intervention, Color Revolution, and the Arab Spring. Arguably, the West’s operations can be divided into three main phases. First of all, the West sought to install political opposition, nongovernmental organizations, and media. Secondly, the creation of political dissent and voices destabilizing local social order, and then the imposition of economic, political, and even military activities when acquiring a window of opportunity. Eventually, the building of a friendly regime.<sup>6</sup>

Referring to a graphic (see Table 1), it is clear that the “Gerasimov Doctrine” integrates the previous experiences and conceptualizes a conflict into multiple stages and highlights indirect and asymmetric thinking. It underlines power from conflating non-military and military measures, roughly a four-to-one ratio. Between both, information plays a significant role as a weapon and in its own right. Furthermore, through amplifying the existing societal, political, economic, cultural, or ideological divisions in the target society, the Doctrine intends to undermine the society’s cohesion and resilience. Importantly, hybrid warfare always seeks tailored breach of the vulnerabilities of the target society.

In its substance, hybrid warfare shares many ideas with Liddell Hart’s “indirect approach” at both strategic level and tactical levels. According to his theory, the true gauge of an indirect approach is seeking to disturb the opponents’ and thus throw them off balance. Informational method is a crucial aspect. Similarly, Sun Tzu in *The*

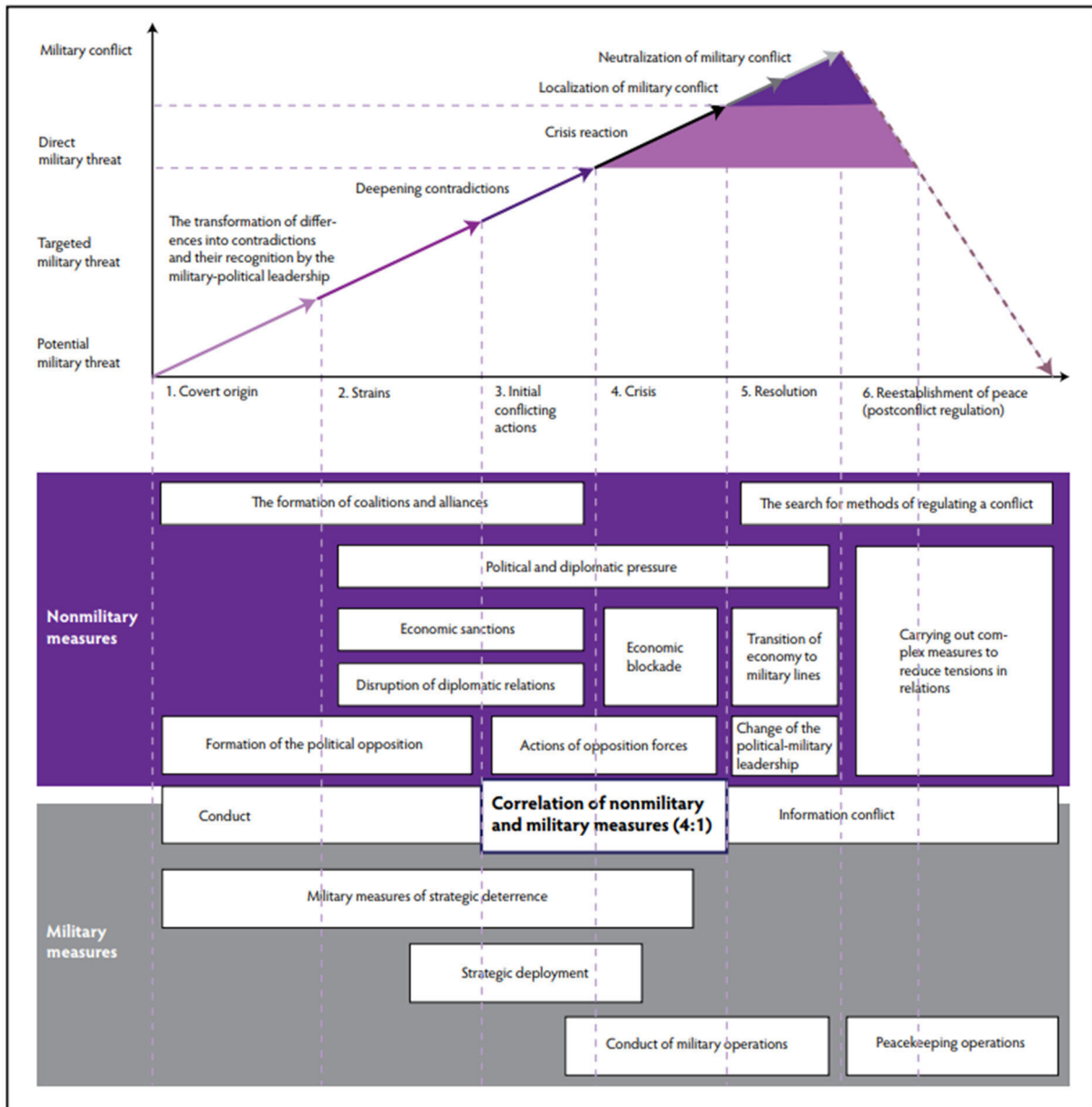


<sup>4</sup> “Hybrid threats as a concept,” *Hybrid CoE*, <https://www.hybridcoe.fi/hybrid-threats-as-a-phenomenon/>.

<sup>5</sup> Arsalan Bilal, “Hybrid Warfare – New Threats, Complexity, and ‘Trust’ as the Antidote,” *NATO Review*, November 30, 2021, <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/articles/2021/11/30/hybrid-warfare-new-threats-complexity-and-trust-as-the-antidote/index.html>.

<sup>6</sup> Charles Bartles, *Getting Gerasimov Right*, *Military Review* (January-February 2016), 31-33.





**FIGURE:** Gerasimov's Hybrid Warfare

(Source: Valery Gerasimov, The Value of Science is in the Foresight: New Challenges Demand Rethinking the Forms and Methods of Carrying Out Combat Operations, *Military Review* (January-February, 2016), 28.)

## UKRAINIAN COUNTERMEASURES AGAINST RUSSIAN INFORMATION MANIPULATION AND COGNITIVE WARFARE

After the loss of Crimea, Ukraine continued to face a relentless onslaught of information attacks. These included the dissemination of fake news and disinformation by pro-Russian news media and social networking platforms, cyberattacks launched by hackers targeting governmental agencies and Ukraine's critical infrastructure, and







but also reached out to the world for support. As a result, the Ukrainian voice and message have become a potent weapon against Russia, which has been at a disadvantage on the information battlefield.

## **CONCLUSION**

While much of the existing literature agrees that Russia employed hybrid warfare during its invasion in 2022, there were distinct differences in emphasis compared to the activities observed in 2014 when Putin launched the “special military operation.” In the recent invasion, Russia indeed employed non-military means such as cyberattacks, disinformation campaigns, and cognitive warfare, alongside blatant military action to occupy Ukrainian territory. Faced with this urgent crisis, the Ukrainian government and civil society demonstrated unity and refused to accept any excuse that sought to legitimize the invasion.

Interestingly, Moscow’s preference for violence over other covert informational means to undermine Ukraine’s sovereignty has transformed its previous indirect approach of hybrid warfare, as witnessed in 2014, into a more direct approach. In the earlier instance, Russia deployed only a small number of troops and extensively exploited domestic divisions surrounding pro-EU and pro-Russia diplomacy, as well as ethnic conflicts within Ukraine, to intervene in the state. In the cognitive domain, the Kremlin deceitfully manipulated the sense of insecurity and uncertainty to advance its interests. However, prioritizing the military now is likely to backfire, rendering other efforts futile. The Ukrainian people have formed a unified aversion to the invasion and possess unwavering determination to resist.

Recalling one of the principles in Liddell Hart’s theory, “do not attack if your enemy is on guard,” it has become evident that Russian aggression has proven ineffective and only served to strengthen the will of the Ukrainian people. With continued support from the international community, there is no doubt that Ukraine will not make any concessions. Consequently, the ongoing Russian-Ukrainian war will be a contest of pure force.

※

Dr. Tsung-Han Wu is an Assistant Research Fellow at Division of Cyber Security and Decision-Making Simulation, INDSR. His research interests include Cybersecurity, Cognitive Warfare, International Relations, and Chinese Politics.

※



# **DEFENDING THE ECONOMY: RUSSIA'S EXPERIENCE OF COUNTERING EU SANCTIONS IN 2022**

*Charles CJ Wang*

## **INTRODUCTION**

On 21 February 2022, Russian President Vladimir Putin signed the recognition of two breakaway provinces in eastern Ukraine, Donetsk and Lugansk, and sent troops into the eastern part of Ukraine in the name of peacekeeping; after 2 days, Russia sent troops to Ukraine from the northeast, southeast, and south. The U.S. and European Union (EU) immediately imposed economic and financial sanctions against Russia. The sanctions were initiated right before the start of the Russia-Ukraine War. By 25 February 2023, the EU had approved 10 packages of sanctions (see Appendix below). This article assesses the impact of the EU's sanctions on Russia's energy, trade, financial and personnel.

## **EU SANCTIONS AGAINST RUSSIA**

Usually, EU uses sanctions, or in the EU's term "restrictive measures", to target particular policies or behaviors, and those who are responsible for implementing those policies, rather than on a specific country or population. The EU stresses the imposition of sanctions is not punitive and is one of the means by which the EU's policy makers form a holistic political dialogue, while trying to minimize the impacts on civilians and non-targeted sectors. Traditionally, the EU adopts, in addition to asset freezes and travel bans for individuals, sectoral measures (e.g. economic, financial, export and arms restrictions).

In the case for sanctions imposed on Russia since the war broke out, however, the 10 rounds of sanctions adopted by the EU so far go way beyond those mentioned above,

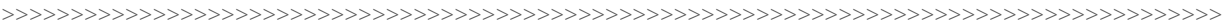
ranging from energy, finance, trade, industry, freezing of the assets of the Central Bank of Russia (CBR), important political, military and economic personnel, suspension of exchanges in science and technology, sports, culture and academic spheres, sea and air blockade, military and civilian dual-use embargo, etc. More than 1,000 corporations followed up on these government-imposed sanctions with their own sanctions, whereby companies restricted or halted commercial activities in Russia.

The EU's sanctions against Russia have two purposes: (1) to limit Russia's access to various resources, such as capital, weapons components, etc., to cause serious consequences for Russia's invasion of Ukraine, and to effectively undermine Russia's ability to continue its aggression; (2) to hobble the Russian economy, and make Putin's regime unpopular domestically, and hopefully to bring an end to Putin's regime.

**THE COST OF SANCTIONS**

From a micro perspective, the total of personal assets frozen in the EU has reached €21.5 billion, and €300 billion for CBR assets. From a macro perspective, €43.9 billion in EU's exported goods to Russia and €91.2 billion in imported goods from Russia are under sanctions.<sup>1</sup> According to the latest Russian statistics, however, under the comprehensive economic blockade from the West, Russia's GDP fell only 2.1% in 2022, which is very different from the estimate at the beginning of the war.<sup>2</sup> Under the economic sanctions of the West, Russia will suffer a huge loss of economic potential in the future. The loss comes from two sources.

The first is the loss of the export market. Raw material export is the major source of fiscal earnings for Russia, and Europe is Russia's largest raw material market. In 2021, the total EU-Russia trade in goods amounted to \$282.1 billion, accounting for 36% of Russia's trade in goods. The EU's imports were worth €158.5 billion and were dominated by fuel and mining products – especially mineral fuels (€98.9 billion, 62%), wood (€3.16 billion, 2.0%), iron and steel (€7.4 billion, 4.7%), and fertilizers (€1.78 billion, 1.1%).<sup>3</sup> The following section discusses the heaviest hit sectors of the Russian economy: energy and finance.



<sup>1</sup> "EU sanctions against Russia explained," *European Council*, June 26, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/policies/sanctions/restrictive-measures-against-russia-over-ukraine/sanctions-against-russia-explained/>.  
<sup>2</sup> "Russian GDP down 2.1% in 2022 — statistics," *TASS*, April 4, 2023. <https://tass.com/economy/1601481>; "Russia's GDP decline could hit 12.4% this year, economy ministry document shows," *TASS*, April 27, 2022, <https://www.reuters.com/business/russias-gdp-decline-could-hit-124-this-year-economy-ministry-document-shows-2022-04-27/>.  
<sup>3</sup> "Russia- EU trade relations with Russia. Facts, figures and latest developments," *European Union*, [https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/russia\\_en](https://policy.trade.ec.europa.eu/eu-trade-relationships-country-and-region/countries-and-regions/russia_en).

## ***SANCTIONS ON RUSSIAN ENERGY***

The most important economic tie between Russia and EU is energy, thus the EU did not focus its sanctions on energy, while the United States and the United Kingdom announced as early as March 8 that they would stop importing Russian energy. On March 11, the EU's informal summit promised to end its dependence on Russia's "as soon as possible" without setting an exact date, and reluctantly proposed to completely end its dependence on Russian energy by 2027. Affected by the Bucha Massacre in early April, public opinion began to change, and even Germany, one of the most conservative countries in sanctioning the Russian energy sector, began to waver. The German Defense Minister stated that the EU must discuss an embargo on Russian natural gas. In early May, European Commission President Ursula von der Leyen announced the details of the sixth round of sanction against Russia, including gradually ending dependence on Russian oil. Crude oil would be phased out within six months, and refined oil by the end of 2022. In order to persuade related countries like Hungary, Slovenia, and the Czech Republic not to veto these plans, Brussels gave these countries permission to import oil through the Friendship Pipeline without restrictions.

In addition, a ban on insurance and financing of oil shipments to third countries was proposed. As EU operators are important providers of such services, such a ban would make it difficult for Russia to continue exporting its crude oil to the rest of the world. However, as UK only banned Russian tankers from entering the UK after December 31, 2022 and the oil price hiked after June, the EU postponed the initiative.

The eighth round of sanctions, following on the previous G7's oil price ceiling on Russian seaborne oil, adopted a price cap on Russian crude oil and petroleum products exports to third countries starting from December 5, 2022 and February 5, 2023 respectively. The initial price cap for crude oil was set at \$60 per barrel, while petroleum product at \$100 per barrel. The price cap is adjustable to meet the market situation.

## ***FINANCIAL SANCTIONS***

Financial sanctions include several elements, namely freezing the foreign assets of CBR and Russian nationals, prohibiting access to European financial markets. The first three rounds of sanctions focused primarily on prohibiting the provision of financial services and funds in the money and stock markets to the Russian government, the Central Bank and organizations under their control, and state-owned enterprises, thereby cutting off Russia's access to Western capital markets. In addition, in the area of personal finance, the acceptance of Russian residents' deposits above a certain value is prohibited, as well









and the EU have tried to close these loopholes by strengthening the custom screening in these countries.

Third, Russia did its best to enhance its economic tie with Asia after the sanctions started. “Pivot to Asia” has been Putin’s policy since 2012. Oil and gas successfully sold to Asia, especially China and India, have largely mitigated the loss of the EU market.

## CONCLUSION

Although Russia has actively responded to Western economic sanctions and the short-term economic losses are not as severe as expected, but as time goes by, the impact will become more and more noticeable. For example, some components and software for which Russia has long relied on imports cannot be replaced or updated, which will reduce productivity in the future. Other intangible losses brought about by the war are still to emerge. For example, young men emigrating to neighboring countries to avoid mobilization has cause a large loss of young scientific researchers and information professionals. The effects of a prolonged production decline will slowly become apparent.

### APPENDIX: Eu Sanctions Against Russia

Date	Energy	Finance	Trade and Industry	Personnel and international ORGs
Feb. 22, 2022	halt the certification of Nord Stream 2			
Feb. 23 (1 <sup>st</sup> package)		prohibition on providing financial market services and funds for the Russian government, CBR, or ORGs under their control	prohibit Donetsk and Luhansk from trade, investment, tourism, and export of minerals, metals, machinery, military-related products and mining technologies	asset freezing and travel bans on 351 members of the Russian State Duma & 27 high profile individuals and entities
Feb. 25, 2022 (2 <sup>nd</sup> package)	prohibit the sale, supply, transfer or export to Russia of specific goods and technologies for oil refining	cut Russia's access to the most important capital markets; prohibit the acceptance of deposits exceeding a certain value from Russian nationals or residents, the holding of accounts of Russian clients by the EU Central Securities Depositories, the selling of euro-denominated securities to Russian clients	ban the sale of all aircraft, spare parts and equipment to Russian airlines; restrictions on exports of dual-use goods and technology	asset freezing of the Russian President, Minister of Foreign Affairs, members of the National Security Council, and the remaining members of the Russian State Duma; visa facilitation provisions for officials and businessmen
Feb. 28, 2022		prohibit any transaction with CBR unless	ban on the overflight of EU airspace and	add 26 individuals and 1 organization to

Date	Energy	Finance	Trade and Industry	Personnel and international ORGs
(3 <sup>rd</sup> package)		absolutely necessary	on access to EU airports by Russian carriers of all kinds	the list of sanction
Mar. 2, 2022 (3 <sup>rd</sup> package)		exclude key Russian banks from the SWIFT system; Prohibit investing in projects co-financed by the Russian Direct Investment Fund; Prohibit the provision of euro-denominated banknotes to Russia	Prohibit state-owned media Russia Today and Sputnik from broadcasting in the EU	
Mar. 15, 2022 (4 <sup>th</sup> package)	ban on new investment in the Russian energy sector.	prohibit EU agencies from providing financial rating services to Russian companies	prohibit transactions with certain Russian State-owned enterprises, with the exception of State-owned banks, railways and the maritime shipping register; Prohibit the export of luxury goods; ban on imports of iron and steel products	add 15 individuals and 9 ORGs to the list of those sanctioned
Apr. 8, 2022 (5 <sup>th</sup> package)	ban on all forms of Russian coal.	asset freeze on four additional Russian banks (Bank Otkritie, Novikombank, Sovcombank & VTB); prohibit provision of high-value crypto-asset services; ban on providing trust services to wealthy Russians	freight road operators working in the EU, except for shipment for essentials; export bans on quantum computing, advanced semiconductors, sensitive machinery, transportation and chemicals; exclude Russia from EU public contracts	addition of a further 217 individuals and 18 ORGs on the sanction list
Jun. 3, 2022 (6 <sup>th</sup> package)	Crude and refined oil embargo with exception for Bulgaria & Croatia; prohibit EU operators from providing maritime oil tanker insurance and finance services to non-EU countries	exclude Russian banks (Sberbank, Credit Bank of Moscow & Agricultural Bank from the SWIFT system	expand list of dual-use technology export; suspension of Rossiya RTR/RTR Planeta, Rossiya 24/Russia 24, and TV Centre International; ban on providing accounting, auditing, statutory audit, bookkeeping and tax consulting services, business and management consulting, and public relations services	add further 65 individuals and 18 ORGs on the sanction list

Date	Energy	Finance	Trade and Industry	Personnel and international ORGs
Jul. 21, 2022 (7 <sup>th</sup> package)	exempt certain Russian state-owned companies from transporting oil to third countries	sanctioned people obliged to declare their assets, in order to facilitate the freezing of their assets in the EU extending bans on accepting deposits	gold import ban; Export controls on dual use and advanced technology reinforced by extending the list of items; Port access ban	add a further 48 individuals and 9 ORGs on the sanction list
Oct. 5, 2022 (8 <sup>th</sup> package)	implement the G7 oil price cap	sanctioned people are obliged to declare their assets, in order to facilitate the freezing of their assets in the EU	gold import ban; extend items on export controls on dual use & advanced technology; additional import restrictions on steel products, machinery, plastic, textile, etc., additional restrictions on State-owned enterprises, Detering sanctions circumvention	add 28 individuals and 7 ORGs on the sanction list, and those involved in Russia's occupation, annexation, and sham "referenda" in the occupied territories of the Donetsk, Luhansk, Kherson, and Zaporizhzhia regions to sanction list
Dec. 22, 2022 (9 <sup>th</sup> package)		ban on the Russian Regional Development Bank	four additional Russian channels sanctioned in the EU; cutting Russia's access to drones, laptop, printed circuits, radio navigational systems, radio remote control apparatus, aircraft engines and parts of engines, cameras and lenses	add almost 200 additional individuals and ORGs
Feb. 25, 2023 (10 <sup>th</sup> package)	prohibit Russian nationals and entities booking gas storage capacity	add 3 Russian banks to the list of asset freeze and the prohibition to make funds and economic resources available	new export restrictions on sensitive dual-use and advanced technologies, heavy trucks, goods easily directed to military use, etc., additional import ban on bitumen, synthetic rubber	add about 120 individuals and entities to sanctions list

※

Dr. Charles CJ Wang is an Assistant Research Fellow at Division of Cyber Security and Decision-Making Simulation, INDSR. His research interests include Quantitative Analysis, Supply Chain Security, and Russian Economy.

※

# ON THE VARIABLES IN THE RUSSIA-UKRAINE WAR

*Shiau-Shyang Liou*

## INTRODUCTION

The Russia-Ukraine War has been raging for over a year and the war situation remains at a stalemate. Ukraine has vowed to expel Russian troops within its borders and even retake Crimea, which Russia annexed in 2014, rather than ceding territory or making any compromises to end the war. On the other side, Russia has carried out partial mobilization to compensate for the shortage of front-line troops and has shown no intention of accepting a truce.

It is evident that the Russia-Ukraine War will be difficult to resolve. However, the future development of the war will be influenced by many variables, not just the battles between Russia and Ukraine. The paper aims to explore the variables related to the Russia-Ukraine War in an attempt to provide a comprehensive understanding of the war.

## WESTERN “UKRAINE FATIGUE”

Since Ukraine turned the tide of the war and regained Kharkov and Kherson from September to November 2022, its determination to refuse to negotiate with Russia has become firmer. However, the war situation reached a stalemate thereafter, and Ukraine has continued to seek increased military aid from the West, particularly heavy armaments, to facilitate the recovery of territory.

Western support for Ukraine has been crucial to its resistance against Russian aggression. In addition to providing military aid, the West has imposed economic sanctions on Russia with the aim of undermining Russia’s ability to continue the war while strengthening the Ukrainian army’s resistance. However, the West’s military aid to

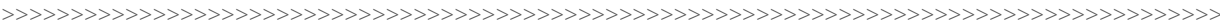


likely to favor Russia, putting Ukraine at the risk of losing the entire war.

**THE GREAT POWER POLITICS BEHIND THE WAR**

According to an investigation by the Washington Post, the premise of U.S. military aid to Ukraine is to avoid direct conflict between the United States and Russia and prevent Russia from escalating the war.<sup>5</sup> Since the war started, aid to Ukraine among Western countries has varied based on the war situation. Germany and France seem to be more cautious, while the United States and the United Kingdom have showed a more supportive attitude. However, the overall stance of Western countries against Russia is similar, with the primary goal being to prevent the war from escalating and to avoid direct involvement.

The respective positions of Western countries are evident in their approach to providing main battle tanks to Ukraine. On January 15, 2023, the United Kingdom pledged to aid Ukraine with 14 Challenger II tanks, becoming the first country to provide heavy tanks at Ukraine’s request. The move was tantamount to encouraging Western countries to provide military aid based on Ukraine’s needs. Thus, Germany was under pressure to provide Ukraine with Leopard 2 tanks or allow other countries to donate the same tanks to Ukraine. After Germany agreed to aid Ukraine with Leopard 2 tanks on January 25, 2023, Chancellor of Germany Olaf Scholz said on February 5 that he had reached a consensus with Zelensky that the weapons provided by the West would only be used on Ukrainian territory, and Russia would not be attacked using these weapons. Scholz also emphasized that Germany closely coordinates with its allies and carefully weighs each batch of military aid to Ukraine to avoid escalation of the war.<sup>6</sup> Hence, while Germany is one of the countries that primarily provide military aid to Ukraine, it often expedites delivery under pressure, especially when other allies have taken the lead.<sup>7</sup> U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken revealed in an internal meeting on February 15, 2023, that the United States does not actively encourage Ukraine to retake Crimea. The current focus is on assisting Ukraine in making progress on the Eastern



<sup>5</sup> Shane Harris, Karen DeYoung and Isabelle Khurshudyan, “Russia’s Gamble: The Post Examined the Lead-up to the Ukraine War. Here’s What We Learned,” *The Washington Post*, August 16, 2022, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/national-security/2022/08/16/ukraine-road-to-war-takeaways/>.

<sup>6</sup> Olha Hlushchenko, “There Is A Consensus’ with Zelenskyy that Russian Territory Will Not Be Attacked with Western Weapons – Scholz,” *Ukrainska Pravda*, February 5, 2023, <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2023/02/5/7387966/>.

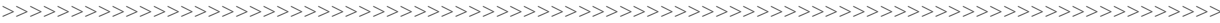
<sup>7</sup> Ruairi Casey, “What’s behind Germany’s Hesitance over Leopard 2 Battle Tanks?,” *Aljazeera*, January 24, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/1/24/as-pressure-mounts-germans-remain-conflicted-over-leopard-tanks>.



Ukraine battlefield. Retaking Crimea is considered a red line for Russian President Vladimir Putin, and any attempt by Ukraine to retake it could provoke a serious response from Russia.<sup>8</sup> However, since Russia's annexation of Crimea in 2014, the United States and NATO have maintained that Crimea is Ukrainian territory, without taking any substantial action. While Blinken did not explicitly oppose Ukraine's recovery of Crimea, the United States' intentions are evident.

The opinions of Scholz and Blinken reflect the stance of most Western countries. While they are concerned about Russia's potential victory in the war, they also fear that the war could expand and escalate out of control. Western countries are also worried about Russian retaliation, so they provide military aid to Ukraine but limit the targets of the Ukrainian army to mitigate risk. The decision to provide advanced fighters to Ukraine is another example. On January 30, 2023, French President Emmanuel Macron did not rule out aiding Ukraine with fighters but laid out several prerequisites. These included Ukraine making a formal request, using the fighters only for defense without escalating the conflict, and ensuring that the military aid does not weaken France's own military force. Macron later announced on May 15 that France was preparing to train fighter pilots for Ukraine but ruled out delivering fighters to Kyiv.<sup>9</sup> On the other hand, Biden refused to provide Ukraine with fighters at the beginning of the year, but at the G7 summit in Hiroshima on May 15, he stated that he had obtained a guarantee from Zelensky that the F-16 fighters provided by the West would not be used to attack Russian territory. The United States agreed to transfer the F-16 fighters to Ukraine through a third party.<sup>10</sup> Furthermore, most of the countries aiding Ukraine are European, reflecting the geopolitical considerations and fear of Russia by the donor countries. After all, if Ukraine were to be annexed by Russia, European countries would then directly face the threat of Russia.

China is another variable in the war. Prior to the war, China believed that Russia would quickly conquer Ukraine, and it declared that China and Russia are not allies, they are better than allies. The friendship between China and Russia has no limit, and there



<sup>8</sup> Alexander Ward, Paul Mcleary, "Blinken: Crimea A 'Red Line' for Putin as Ukraine Weighs Plans to Retake It," *Politico*, February 15, 2023, <https://www.politico.com/news/2023/02/15/blinken-crimea-ukraine-putin-00083149>.

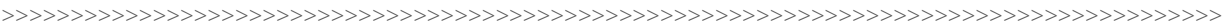
<sup>9</sup> "Macron Says Will Not Rule Out Sending Fighter Jets to Ukraine," *FRANCE 24*, January 30, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20230130-live-deadly-russian-shelling-targets-kherson-kyiv-calls-for-faster-arms-supplies>; "Macron Says 'Door Is Open' to Train Ukrainian Fighter Pilots," *Le Monde*, May 15, 2023, [https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2023/05/15/macron-says-door-is-open-to-train-ukrainian-fighter-pilots\\_6026784\\_7.html](https://www.lemonde.fr/en/france/article/2023/05/15/macron-says-door-is-open-to-train-ukrainian-fighter-pilots_6026784_7.html).

<sup>10</sup> Emily Goodin and Nikki Schwab, "Biden Said Zelensky Gave Him 'Flat Assurance' That F-16 Fighter Jets Would Not Take Ukraine War to Russian Soil," *MailOnline*, May 21, 2023, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-12107953/Biden-said-Zelensky-assured-F-16s-not-war-Russia.html>.

is no restricted area for cooperation.<sup>11</sup> Although the development of the Russia-Ukraine War did not unfold as expected by China, and China was unwilling to publicly support Russia, it refrains from condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine. China assists Russia by timely importing Russian energy and raw materials, thereby easing the pressure of Western economic sanctions on Russia. These actions clearly indicate China's covert support for Russia.

On February 24, 2023, China released a statement entitled "China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis" on the anniversary of the Russia-Ukraine War.<sup>12</sup> While this move seemed aimed at promoting a peaceful end to the war, the content reaffirmed Chinese leader Xi Jinping's previous stance on the Russia-Ukraine war. Notably, the statement referred to the ongoing conflict as the "Ukrainian crisis," demonstrating that China's position echoes Russia's narrative about the war. Although Russia expressed approval of China's statement on February 27, it clarified that the conditions for a peaceful resolution were not currently present. Russia insisted that conditions for a ceasefire would only be met when Ukraine recognized Russia's claims over the four oblasts (Luhansk, Donetsk, Zaporizhzhia and Kherson). Ukraine refuted the plan as it would only freeze the war and create a new demarcation line, unrelated to peace. Ukraine suggested that only it is eligible to initiate a peace initiative. Biden stated that China's proposal showed no signs of benefiting anyone other than Russia. NATO Secretary-General Jens Stoltenberg criticized China's mediation for having little credibility, and President of the European Commission Ursula von der Leyen pointed out that China's statement did not offer a new peace plan but rather a series of principles. China's peace plan proposal was nothing new; it merely reaffirmed previous statements and intended to use a neutral and peaceful stance to disguise its secret support for Russia. The reaction of major powers exposed the futility of China's actions and reinforced the perception that China is aligning itself with Russia.

From March 20 to March 22, 2023, Xi Jinping visited Russia at Putin's invitation. While China presented the visit as a trip focused on friendship, cooperation, and peace, the actions of both heads of state, as portrayed in their respective official media prior



<sup>11</sup> "wai jiao bu: zhong e bu shi meng you sheng si meng you" [外交部: 中俄兩國不是盟友·勝似盟友 Foreign Ministry: China and Russia Are Not Allies, But Better than Allies], *People's Daily Online* [人民網], October 22, 2021, <http://world.people.com.cn/n1/2021/1022/c1002-32261779.html>; "Совместное заявление Российской Федерации и Китайской Народной Республики о международных отношениях, вступающих в новую эпоху, и глобальном устойчивом развитии," *Президент России*, 4 февраля 2022, <http://kremlin.ru/supplement/5770>.

<sup>12</sup> "China's Position on the Political Settlement of the Ukraine Crisis," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China*, February 24, 2023, [https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa\\_eng/zxxx\\_662805/202302/t20230224\\_11030713.html](https://www.fmprc.gov.cn/mfa_eng/zxxx_662805/202302/t20230224_11030713.html).

to the visit, indicate strong support from Xi Jinping for Putin. However, for political actions to have a substantial impact on the Russia-Ukraine war, they must translate into tangible material support, including potential military aid. This is precisely what Western countries are most concerned about.

Therefore, the Western camp has repeatedly warned China not to provide military aid to Russia. The United States has accused China of supplying lethal weapons to Russia, while the United Kingdom and France have also called on China not to provide any “material assistance” to Russia or its proxies at the Paris summit on March 10. China has consistently denied these accusations from Western countries. Western countries worry that Chinese military aid could alter the course of the Russia-Ukraine war and potentially escalate the conflict. Thus, they continue to deter China in order to prevent such military aid from occurring. However, it is uncertain whether China is willing to deplete its own stockpiles of arms and ammunition for Russia, especially considering the severe sanctions that may result. In any case, this highlights Western countries’ belief that Chinese military aid to Russia could significantly change the current war situation and potentially escalate it. The future actions of China remain to be observed.

## **RUSSIA’S INTERNAL FACTORS**

Putin’s obsession with Ukraine is the main reason for Russia’s “special military operation” against Ukraine, and it is also a crucial variable affecting the Russia-Ukraine war. In other words, if the Putin factor disappears, the Russia-Ukraine war may also change accordingly. This is why the outside world has been speculating on Putin’s physical condition, and Putin is suffering from a fatal disease and may pass away soon. There are countless similar inferences, but most are speculation and exaggeration, and many even provoke division. Putin's will is indeed the key to whether Russia continues to fight or not, but it does not mean that the war will end if he cannot serve as President or dies suddenly. Furthermore, the presence of a successor for Putin has always been a matter of concern for the international community. If Putin is unable to serve as President or passes away suddenly due to physical factors, Russia may indeed cease fighting. However, the continuation of the war would still depend on the situation at that time, which can be divided into two different scenarios: one without a successor and the other with a successor.

If Putin does not designate a successor, and the Russian political situation falls into a power struggle due to the issue of succession, similar to the situation after the death of Vladimir Lenin and Joseph Stalin in the Soviet Union period, whether the war contin-



subsequent presidential election or even bring about a truce, it will still depend on the overall situation at that time. The level of Western aid and the performance of the Ukrainian army will also be key factors affecting the combat situation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Western “Ukraine Fatigue,” great power politics and Russia’s internal factors can be regarded as the key factors affecting the future development of the Russia-Ukraine War. What they have in common is that they are closely related to the war situation. Western “Ukraine Fatigue” caused by the stalemate of the war situation is steadily increasing. The degree of involvement of the great powers in the Russia-Ukraine War is related to the war situation. The war situation not only has a bearing on the divisions in Russia’s internal attitude towards the war but will also determine Russia’s future choice of continuing the war or seeking a truce. While the three key variables will be affected by the war situation, they will also influence the subsequent development of the war situation, thus there is a linkage among them. The future development of the Russia-Ukraine War will depend on the key variables mentioned above, and they deserve further observation.

※

Dr. Shiau-Shyang Liou is an Associate Research Fellow at Division of National Security Research, INDSR. His research interests include Security Research, Russia & Eurasian Area Studies, Arctic Geopolitics, China's One Belt One Road Initiative (BRI).

※

# HOW TO CREATE A MORE EFFECTIVE ARMY: LESSONS FROM THE RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR

*Yurii Poita*

## INTRODUCTION

The Russian-Ukrainian war has become a valuable source for military analysis and even revision of approaches, strategies and tactics of military operations. The assessments made earlier by Western capitals, based on the balance of military forces, and prediction the imminent collapse of the armed forces and the resistance of Ukraine as soon as it clashed militarily with Russia, have been shown to be well wide of the mark. The Armed Forces of Ukraine not only successfully resisted the Russian army, vastly superior in terms of numbers and weapons, but also demonstrated high-level ability to think and act proactively, unconventionally and creatively, in the face of a disruption of military and administrative control and logistics lines.

Russia's absolute advantage in aviation and missiles, navy, tanks, combat vehicles, artillery and ammunition was largely mitigated by Ukraine's approach to defense, which combined flexibility of management, decentralization, independence from high command, the use of a variety of tactics and means, and the integration of traditional and asymmetric tactics.

The unexpectedly fierce defense of Ukraine frustrated the plans of the Russian command, led to enormous losses in manpower and equipment by Russia, and forced them to retreat from the Kyiv and Chernihiv regions of Ukraine. Subsequently, thanks to the supply of Western weapons, Ukraine was able to successfully carry out a counter-offensive operation, liberating the Kharkov region and Kherson.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the aspects that improved the effectiveness of the Ukrainian army, the advantages of which neutralized the numerical and qualitative advantage of the Russian armed forces.





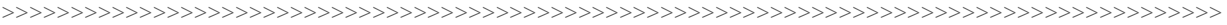


tions towers in combat areas by the Russian armed forces, the Starlink satellite communications system of the American company SpaceX has been a game changer. The first Starlink terminals were activated on the territory of Ukraine on February 26, two days after the start of the full-scale war. According to the Minister of Digital Transformation of Ukraine Mykhailo Fedorov: Starlink helps us in our daily struggle on all fronts. Even if there is no electricity or the Internet, through the generators, with the help of Starlink, we will be able to restore any connection in Ukraine.

As of autumn 2022, about 20,000 Starlink terminals were activated in Ukraine, which made it possible to neutralize Russia's efforts to deprive Ukraine of mobile and Internet communications through missile, cybernetic and radio-electronic attacks. Russian efforts to disrupt SpaceX with cyberattacks, pinpoint the location of the Starlink terminals, and suppress their operation with the help of electronic warfare have so far been unsuccessful. The presence of a stable Internet connection allowed the Ukrainian armed forces to ensure effective C2 and implementation of network-centric warfare methods.

**FACTOR 2 - LEADERSHIP OF JUNIOR COMMANDERS**

The armed forces have traditionally been a very conservative and vertically oriented structure, in which discipline, unity of command, and strict execution of orders are key and indispensable elements. However, in a high-intensity war against a dominant enemy, orders from higher headquarters may be significantly delayed, or due to poor situational awareness of higher headquarters, be completely wrong. In this case, as the Russian troops' experience has shown, the troops lost the initiative on the battlefield, did not know what to do, suffered significant losses, and lost morale.<sup>4</sup> Therefore, it is important for troops to learn to act autonomously, without waiting for orders from higher headquarters, guided by their own intelligence and the situation on the ground. Having one's own intelligence is a key element for taking the initiative, but it is important to teach junior and middle commanders to act without orders from above and take responsibility for themselves, and senior commanders must learn to delegate authority to junior ones. The underlying principle should be – “it is better to make the wrong decision than not to make it at all.”



<sup>4</sup> СОНЯ САВИНА, “Какие слабости показала российская армия в Украине”; Christopher Morris, “Ukraine war: Russia's problems on the battlefield stem from failures at the top”; Tim Ripley, “Ukraine conflict: Russian military adapts command-and-control for Ukraine operations,” *Janes*, March 7, 2022, <https://www.janes.com/defence-news/news-detail/ukraine-conflict-russian-military-adapts-command-and-control-for-ukraine-operations>.







Ukraine, and 74% trusted the Security Service of Ukraine.<sup>11</sup> This confidence and support is also an element of successful resistance and defense.

At the moment, it can be assumed that the reasons for the maintenance of high morale by Ukrainians are the following factors:

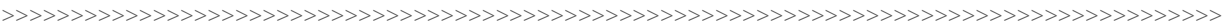
First, the effective resistance of the Ukrainian armed forces and the performance of the military-political leadership of Ukraine. In the event of a quick defeat of Ukrainian troops, mass surrender and flight of Ukrainian leaders abroad, the consequences for national morale would have been catastrophic and Ukraine would most likely have capitulated. Therefore, it was important not to fall in the first days and weeks of the war, which in the future would make it possible to mobilize forces and society for steadfast defense.

Secondly, post-material values are inherent in Ukrainian society. This was vividly demonstrated by the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the Revolution of Dignity in 2013, when Ukrainian society protested against blatant injustice (in 2004 due to massive election fraud, and in 2013 due to the government's harsh crackdown on a peaceful demonstration). The readiness for self-sacrifice for the sake of post-material values probably became the element that cemented Ukrainian society in 2022 and allowed the people to oppose brutal aggression.

Thirdly, the war is perceived by Ukrainian society as existential, a war for the survival of the nation. Everyone understands that in the event of a military defeat, not only will the state collapse, but also the nation, with its rich and centuries-old history. Russia, carrying out genocide on the territory of Ukraine, erasing everything Ukrainian, carrying out mass deportations of Ukrainians from the occupied territory, is trying to destroy the very essence of Ukraine, which is unacceptable to its citizens.

Fourth, Ukrainian leaders have established very effective communication with their people. President Volodymyr Zelensky's daily addresses to the nation have become an effective communication channel, a platform for exchanges between the government and society, a core element of people's trust in the leadership. Zelensky's regular posts inspire confidence, loyalty, hope and high morale. The vitality of the digital infrastructure, and in particular Starlink, has become important, providing real-time communication between the government and the people.

Fifth, the war became a trigger for the development of patriotic musical works,



<sup>11</sup> Інна Андаліцька, "Кому українці довіряють найбільше: результати опитування (інфографіка) [Who do Ukrainians trust the most: survey results (infographic)]," UNIAN, March 15, 2023, <https://www.unian.ua/society/rejting-doviri-v-ukrajini-rezultati-svizhogo-opituvannya-ta-infografika-12180378.html>.

which became the basis of optimism, humor, national resilience, unity and Ukrainian identity. The song "Oh, the Red Viburnum in the Meadow," performed by the leader of the Boombox group Andriy Khlyvnyuk with a machine gun in his hands against the backdrop of St. Sophia in Kyiv, became a hit and aroused tremendous interest in Ukraine and its diaspora in the West, significantly strengthening international support for Ukraine. In this regard, other symbols of Ukrainian resilience and victory played a big role: the "Russian warship" stamp, "Dog Patron," Bayraktar and others inspired millions.

## **CONCLUSION**

The effectiveness of the actions of the Ukrainian army and defense as a whole was achieved due to a number of factors that had a multiplier effect and increased flexibility and survivability. In this sense, an integrated approach is needed, since some factors automatically affect others. For example, the presence of drones makes it possible to ensure effective reconnaissance of tactical units, apply the principles of network-centric warfare, strengthen the leadership of commanders, achieve qualitative advantages on the battlefield, thus ensuring military victories, saving the lives of soldiers, and maintaining high morale.

The second conclusion is the strengthening of Ukrainian defense through active and effective civil-military cooperation. Courses organized by volunteers, aimed at developing leadership in the army, made it possible to improve the leadership qualities, initiative and flexibility of junior commanders, which made it possible to form a more effective army compared to the Russian invaders. The influx of civilians into the army, especially in the territorial defense units, made it possible to create an intellectual core that effectively introduced new technologies, made it possible to reduce the conservatism of the military, increase its flexibility, and made defense the concern of the whole nation.

Thirdly, the activities and post-material values of society, the understanding that the defense of Ukraine is a top priority for Ukrainians, effective communication between the authorities and the people, the use of cultural and symbolic symbols of Ukrainian victory, have significantly increased the resilience of Ukrainians.

In this regard, the following recommendations can be made to improve combat capabilities of Taiwan: provide units with automatic C2 systems with all the necessary components, including the integration of intelligence; review the system of combat training of service personnel, and if necessary, include issues of leadership development of junior and middle commanders, as defined in the Mission Command concept;

create conditions and ensure effective military-civilian interaction that will enhance the capabilities of the armed forces, promote high morale and ensure the implementation of the concept of total defense.

※

Mr. Yuriy Poita is Head of the Asia-Pacific Section at the Center for Army, Conversion and Disarmament Studies (CACDS) in Kyiv and Asia Section at the New Geopolitics Research Network (NGRN), European China Policy Fellow at Mercator Institute for China Studies (MERICS, Germany). Since October 2022, he has been working as a Visiting Research Fellow at the Institute for National Defense and Security Research. Yuriy Poita specializes in China's influence in the post-Soviet space, Ukrainian-Chinese relations, China's factor in Russian-Ukrainian war, hybrid and conventional warfare

※

## **SUBMISSION**

*Defense Security Brief* (DSB) is a biannual, open access, and peer-reviewed journal published by the Institute for National Defense and Security Research (INDSR) Taipei, Taiwan. Established in 2011, DSB was originally founded by the Ministry of National Defense and continued by the INDSR from 2018. We aim at strengthening research collaboration and fostering exchanges between researchers and experts both domestically and internationally.

DSB publishes original papers, reviews, comments and case studies. Contributions that engage with contemporary international affairs, defense, security, strategy, Indo-Pacific issues and policy reviews are particularly welcome.

All manuscripts must be in English and should be submitted via email to DSB@indsr.org.tw. Please note that the editorial review process can take up to three months. For further information and previous volumes, please visit the official website of DSB:

<https://indsr.org.tw/en/download/2/DEFENSE-SECURITY-BRIEF>

## **GENERAL GUIDELINES**

Authors are advised to follow these guidelines:

- All manuscripts should be between 1,500 - 2,500 including footnotes.
- Citation style: *The Chicago Manual of Style, 16th edition*.
- Co-authorship is allowed.
- A short author's biography no more than 100 words should be included.
- An honorarium is provided upon successful publication (around NT\$1,630/1,000 words or US\$50-58/1,000 words per paper).
- For any further information, please email the Editor, Dr. Tsung-Han Wu, at [t.h.wu@indsr.org.tw](mailto:t.h.wu@indsr.org.tw).



