
**Stop conflating Ukraine and its
inhabitants**

 **critisticuffs**

Ukrainians and other people living on the territory of Ukraine are means used and sacrificed for the strategic ends of others: Russia, EU/NATO and Ukraine.

“Putin”. The Russian state is shelling Ukrainian cities, killing many people in the process. It is killing many others through other means of producing “collateral damage”. Furthermore, it is wreaking havoc on the local infrastructure, cutting many off from essential utilities and supplies even if they are lucky enough not to be directly attacked by the Russian military. The Russian state does not have the programme of killing Ukrainians per se, but it kills them as the resources of the Ukrainian state (and of the EU/NATO) that they are: it kills them because Russia wants to make a point to NATO about its “red lines” when it comes to the **peace order in Europe** and the security guarantees demanded for the Russian state.

“The West”. The EU opened its borders to Ukrainian citizens fleeing the conflict. In accompanying declarations the bloc makes clear who the real addressee of this gesture is: Russia. The EU celebrates its somewhat open borders as a show of its *strength and unity*.¹ In carefully separating the riff raff at its borders into Ukrainian citizens and permanent residents (**welcome for at least one year**), other people coming from Ukraine (temporarily sheltered) and everybody else (denied), the bloc also clarifies that humanitarian catastrophes require a **worthy foe** to qualify as such.² In accepting refugees (in these numbers) the EU declares itself responsible for Ukraine. The temporal nature of the shelter provided – which leaves those who escaped in limbo – further emphasises that the EU intends to resolve the situation in Ukraine: those sheltered should resettle to Ukraine once a peace according to the EU’s preferences is established there. The EU uses refugees to underpin its claim to a “seat at the table”. Ukrainian and other refugees are shifted around by the EU according to its strategic calculations about the Ukrainian state (and others). Meanwhile, the same states and their big NATO ally encourage, **praise** and **materially enable** Ukraine’s bravery to give everything – including their lives – in the war for the free world against Russia, while their think tanks weigh the cost of loss of Ukrainian life ... to NATO.³

¹ “A major reason for the swift action on Thursday was a desire to have tangible results that showed unity with Ukraine, Czech Interior Minister Vít Rakušan told POLITICO during a break in the discussion. ‘It would be better for all of us to have some particular result of our discussion today,’ he said. ‘It’s really necessary to show that the EU in these days is really united.’” (**Politico: EU hails ‘historic’ deal to protect Ukrainian refugees**); “Local volunteers and authorities helping Ukrainians arriving in Romania were ‘showing solidarity in practice, showing that we are based on other values than (Russian President Vladimir) Putin and we are practising these values,’ [EU Home Affairs Commissioner Ylva] Johansson said.” (**EU plans to grant Ukrainians right to stay for up to 3 years**)

² For the last two decades or so, the EU was interested in integrating Ukraine into itself as part of its ambitious project to rival the US (and now also China) as a superpower, promising an existence for the Ukrainian masses as wage workers at the levels seen in other Eastern EU states. When this approach was forcefully stopped by Russia in 2014, the US took over the initiative and Ukraine has since enjoyed the status of a front state useful enough for wearing down the Russian rival but not important enough to fully prop up. Military aid and IMF credits maintained the state and its society at the **brink of collapse**. The misery produced by its adventures in **East expansion** did not prompt the EU to any shows of “solidarity”.

³ “The costs of an insurgency will be tremendous—NATO members are well aware of the bloody toll a conflict takes, after decades of involvement in Afghanistan and Iraq. The human suffering will be extended, as the median length of an insurgency is an estimated 10 years. Refugee flows will move into Europe over time; refugees will have less and less of their own resources to draw upon when they arrive as the war drags on. [...] Despite the costs, NATO members should support any Ukrainian attempt to wrest control of the country back from Moscow’s grasp. The Ukrainian government and army

Ukraine. Ukraine's leader, President Zelenskyy, wins international plaudits for his refusal of offers of sanctuary elsewhere and his gungho demands for ammunition not evacuation. But it is notable that is not a choice his government is prepared to offer the people of Ukraine. Martial Law has been declared and one of its first orders is that men aged 18 to 60 are not allowed to **leave Ukraine**. These men of fighting age are required to stay so that they can be on hand to serve in the defence of the country.⁴ Their lives must be risked for the Ukrainian state, whatever they think of that state, its war and whether that is something they want to kill or get killed over. Millions of Ukrainian men are thereby required to remain in a war zone. Whilst the Ukrainian resistance is celebrated as a triumph of the fighting spirit of a freedom loving people, the obvious fact that the Ukrainian state makes use of its population by force, as its resource to defeat the adversary threatening its existence, passes by almost without comment.

Yet, Ukraine and its leader do not need to rely on brute force alone to make their human resources pick up the fight. Volunteers are so big in numbers, recruitment offices have to **turn them away**. Furthermore, encouraged by a call to arms from their charismatic president (**and Western politicians**) already as of 5 March 2022 reportedly 80,000 people (mostly men) **entered** the country from the West.

On the part of **many of those** who come, or stay, to fight the invaders, this move is motivated by a brutal sleight of hand: the identification of a state and its people.⁵ To patriots across the world it requires no argument that if their country is invaded, they rise up in arms to defend it. An attack on their state is an attack on them, its security is what makes them secure.

But the opposite is true. What is happening is that the security of the Ukrainian state is (meant to be) achieved at the expense of the lives of Ukrainians. Ukrainians are sacrificed for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Ukrainian state under the slogans "Glory to Ukraine" and "Glory to the Heroes".

In peacetime, the love that modern citizens have for their state **references** a social order where it is the

have sent every signal that they intend to fight, and fight hard, to keep their country. Whether or not NATO supports this fight, Washington is likely to suffer a backlash, as Moscow will see the United States' hand at play. In this case, it is better to enjoy the benefits of support if one must already suffer the backlash." (**CSIS Scenario Analysis on a Ukrainian Insurgency**)

⁴ As of writing, those forced to stay are not (yet) forced to pick up arms. This is (at least) partly **due to** a lack of equipment, their lack of combat experience and logistical challenges. There is no guarantee, of course, that this will remain the case. Indeed, the Ukrainian interior minister is **quoted** writing: "Today is the moment when every Ukrainian who can protect his home must take up arms. Not just to help our soldiers, but to cleanse Ukraine of the enemy, once and for all."

⁵ International news reports, such as those cited in the main text, attribute patriotism as the guiding motive to Ukrainians and some mix of commitment to freedom, democracy, civil liberties, anti-fascism or "the West" to non-Ukrainian volunteers. This distinction is also put forward by the Ukrainian state: "More than 140 thousand Ukrainians, mostly men, returned from Europe. Tens of thousands fell into the hands of the Territorial Defense Forces. Of course, there are those who run away. But the whole world sees how the Ukrainian people fight for their country. Over 20k already. appeals from foreigners who are ready to come to Ukraine and protect the world from Russian Nazis on the Ukrainian front. So that the Kremlin evil does not spread." (**Ukrainian Defence Minister Reznikov Oleksii**) While the commitment of **some of** those volunteers to the values ascribed to them is questionable, here we focus on Ukrainian patriots. In any event, whatever their personal motives – from the defeat of fascism to the defence of the "white race" – they all practically volunteer to be means for the self-defence of the Ukrainian state.

state that lays the foundation for the pursuit of individual interests (with the well-known outcome of poverty for most). However, the readiness to sacrifice themselves for the state in times of war leaves even this calculating motive behind.

Ukraine has no bright future to offer to its patriots. In his well-received speeches the Ukrainian president executes the Ukrainian defence strategy. This strategy is prepared to sacrifice everything and everyone in Ukraine for Ukraine.⁶ Assuming that it **cannot win a war against Russia**, the Ukrainian military strategy is to mobilise its entire society in multiple defence “waves” until the “international community” ends the conflict “on favourable terms for Ukraine” (hence the insistence on no-fly zones to draw NATO into a direct confrontation with Russia). The president’s pitch essentially is: “die for the fatherland until NATO intervenes.” Yet, NATO keeps declaring that it **will not** intervene directly in the war, but **prepares** to support a drawn out guerrilla war.

It is thus grotesque when **Western** and **Ukrainian** anarchists and other leftists promote the conflation of a state and its subjects, encourage their comrades to sacrifice themselves – practically for the Ukrainian state, in their mind for liberty – and collect money for the war effort.

Moral creatures that they are, they both collect money to help refugees fleeing the war and collect money for the war. They cannot see the difference between the party in this war, the Ukrainian state, and the victims of this war, its inhabitants.

1 Appendix: On the Strategy of Military Security of Ukraine (Excerpt)

Source: <https://web.archive.org/web/20220103220245/https://www.president.gov.ua/documents/1212021-37661>

Перспективна модель організації оборони України, Збройних Сил України та інших складових сил оборони в частині визначених завдань з оборони України, стратегія та критерії досягнення спільних оборонних спроможностей

Підготовка та ведення всеохоплюючої оборони України потребують нової моделі організації оборони України, Збройних Сил України та інших складових сил оборони, яка повинна забезпечити:

завчасне планування та підготовку до виконання завдань оборони України органів державної влади, усіх складових сил оборони, органів управління національної економіки та органів місцевого самоврядування, підтримання готовності населення та території держави до всеохоплюючої оборони України, проведення превентивних заходів щодо недопущення ескалації воєнного конфлікту;

швидке розгортання сил і засобів територіальної оборони для своєчасного реагування на

⁶ On the Strategy of Military Security of Ukraine. We give an excerpt and our machine translation below in an appendix.

загрози воєнній безпеці, вжиття заходів щодо нейтралізації загроз територіальній цілісності України та залучення населення до всеохоплюючої оборони держави;

застосування в першій хвилі відсічі і стримування збройної агресії проти України сил оборони з проведенням усіх видів спеціальних операцій, зокрема на території противника, для недопущення його просування вглиб території України та стримування подальшої ескалації воєнного конфлікту;

використання у другій хвилі відсічі і стримування збройної агресії проти України військового резерву для посилення сил оборони та забезпечення проведення мобілізації в державі, розгортання руху опору в разі тимчасової окупації окремих територій держави;

застосування у третій хвилі відсічі і стримування збройної агресії проти України додаткових військових частин, сформованих за рахунок мобілізаційних ресурсів та мобілізаційних резервів, припинення за сприяння міжнародної спільноти збройної агресії на вигідних для України умовах;

постконфліктне врегулювання, проведення демобілізації, відновлення контролю за дотриманням режиму державного кордону України та реінтеграцію тимчасово окупованих територій у відбудовний період після закінчення воєнних дій.

1.1 Translation

Perspective model of the organisation of defense of Ukraine, the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other components of the defense forces in terms of certain tasks for the defense of Ukraine, strategy and criteria for achieving joint defense capabilities.

The preparation and conduct of comprehensive defense of Ukraine requires a new model of organisation of defense of Ukraine, the Armed Forces of Ukraine and other components of the defense force, which should provide:

early planning and preparation for the implementation of Ukraine's defense tasks of public authorities, all components of the defense forces, national economy and local governments, maintaining the readiness of the population and territory for comprehensive defense of Ukraine, preventive measures to prevent escalation of military conflict;

rapid deployment of territorial defense forces and means for timely response to threats to military security, taking measures to neutralise threats to the territorial integrity of Ukraine and involving the population in the comprehensive defense of the state;

use in the first wave of repulse and deterrence of armed aggression against Ukraine by defense forces with all kinds of special operations, in particular on enemy territory, to prevent its advance into the territory of Ukraine and deter further escalation of the military conflict;

use in the second wave of repulse and deterrence of armed aggression against Ukraine military reserve to strengthen defense forces and ensure mobilisation in the state, the deployment of resistance in the event of temporary occupation of certain territories of the state;

application in the third wave of repulse and deterrence of armed aggression against Ukraine of additional military units formed at the expense of mobilisation resources and mobilisation reserves, cessation with the assistance of the international community of armed aggression on favorable terms for Ukraine;

post-conflict settlement, demobilisation, restoration of control over compliance with the state border regime of Ukraine and reintegration of the temporarily occupied territories in the reconstruction period after the end of hostilities.