



## Two Words That Could Stop The War In Ukraine

### Description

**A Compromise – Yes, a peace deal on Ukraine is possible:**

## The War In Ukraine Presses On

It's been a year since the capital of Ukraine, Kiev, was saved from Russian conquest. One year has passed since the battle lines in Ukraine were basically restored to what they were before the Russians illegally invaded Ukraine in February 2022.

Russia holds the Russian-speaking eastern Ukrainian provinces and the strategic port of Crimea as they have for years. The pro-Western Ukrainian government controls nearly everywhere else.

Neither side can fundamentally alter this balance. Many bloody attempts have been made. None have altered the status quo.

Escalation is a dangerous prospect, given the fact that Russia is a nuclear-armed power with a leader, Vladimir Putin, that is increasingly committed to achieving victory in Ukraine (whatever that looks like) and is highly sensitive to the appearance of being defeated by the US-backed Ukrainian government.

## Russian Delusions of America's Threat

What's more, whether accurate or not, the Russians truly think that a Ukraine that falls into NATO's orbit will become a base from which NATO can attack the Russian Federation.

Given these factors, Moscow is unlikely to simply withdraw from Ukraine. To Putin and his autocratic regime, this is a matter of survival.

To be fair, if the Russians moved forces into and gave political support to one of America's Latin American neighbors, Washington would lose its mind and do just about anything to stop the Russians from dominating that country.

In fact, there is an historical example of when the United States risked a nuclear war with the Soviet Union over just such a scenario.

Better known as the Cuban Missile Crisis, the United States threatened nuclear world war over the prospect of nearby Cuba becoming not only a pro-Soviet communist state under Fidel Castro, but a base for Soviet intermediate range ballistic missiles and other forces.

A standoff ensued that could have ended in nuclear warfare but, luckily, ended in a negotiated settlement. For Russia today, the situation in Ukraine is a reverse version of what transpired in Cuba in 1962. Today, it is the West that is moving forces into a Russian neighbor that could be used to threaten Moscow at some future date.

It is doubtful that this is, in fact, the real objective of the West.

We'd be so lucky in the West as to have strategists in power who can think. Instead, what we have are two-dimensional-thinking bureaucrats. And NATO has become a bloated bureaucracy less about deterring dreaded Russian aggression in Europe and more about simply preserving its own bureaucratic existence.

The only reason they're galvanizing behind Ukraine against Russia is that NATO failed to galvanize behind the mission of counterterrorism in the 1990s and early 2000s.

Since the end of the Cold War, NATO has lacked a mission.

Even today, with Russian apparently courting war in Europe again, NATO's members are at loggerheads at how to deal with Russia—images of unity notwithstanding (just ask the Germans how they feel about the economic fallout from NATO's war against Russia in Ukraine or the French about how willing they are to risk total warfare with Russia over Ukraine).

Many assumed that Russia's invasion of Ukraine would be the proverbial kick-in-the-pants that the otherwise listless NATO alliance needed to come together.

Yet, divisions among the alliance's key members have never been greater. And the burden of supplying and supporting the war has fallen mostly on the overburdened shoulders of the one country that has other global responsibilities and is an ocean away—the United States.

Despite its other responsibilities and the fact that it has nearly drained its critical stocks of heavy weapons and other important military supplies that will be needed to help defend Taiwan from a Chinese invasion and to better contain an expansionist Iran in the Greater Middle East, America has led NATO as well as can be expected.

## **Strategy, Not Virtue-Signaling, is Needed**

But it's insufficient to simply “stand strong” against Russia in Ukraine.

For starters, contrary to what many seem to believe, Ukraine is not a member of NATO. What's more, because there is an ongoing territorial dispute inside the country, it doesn't technically qualify for

membership into NATO.

Then, there's the question of cost and the wisdom of seemingly endless military commitment to Ukraine. It would seem that most US and European leaders want to signal to the world their virtue against the obviously villainous Russian behavior in Ukraine (and it is abhorrent behavior).

Few in power have dared to ask: to what end?

I was under the impression when Russia invaded that the West wanted only to preserve the friendly Volodymyr Zelenskyy government in Kiev. Mission creep, it seems, is not just a symptom of terrible U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East.

Sadly, it is apparently an essential component to U.S. foreign policy in Ukraine. Russia has maintained control over Eastern Ukraine. The pro-NATO government in Kiev has remains in power over the rest of Ukraine.

Neither side seems to be able to move too far beyond the current division in Ukraine. Both sides are exhausted, even if they won't admit it. The Americans, irrespective of what strategically incompetent politicians in Washington think, cannot maintain its level of commitment in Ukraine without risking its obligations elsewhere.

The basis for a deal is here. Especially with much of the rest of the world's major powers—including [China](#) and [India](#)—encouraging all sides to enter a negotiated settlement.

What the Heck are we doing?

## US Power Elite Double-Down to Death

Washington's elite have convinced themselves that, with just a [few more pieces of equipment](#) and infusions of money (that America doesn't have), the plucky Ukrainians can not only beat back those pesky Russian invaders, but they might even be able to blast key targets deep inside of Russia.

This isn't how wars in the modern era, in which nuclear-armed powers are involved, end. However Putin may have imagined the war playing out when he invaded, his carefully laid plans have not survived contact with the Ukrainians.

At the same time, though, the Ukrainians simply do not have the resources—even with American assistance—to push all the Russian invaders out of their territory.

Besides, most people in Eastern Ukraine and Crimea (and this is going to aggravate many people) [prefer](#) the Russians because they are culturally and linguistically closer to Russia than they are Europe.

The price for peace can now be had by all sides at a bargain.

## Peace is Good for Business, Too

America could come out looking like the great stabilizing force. Washington should call its nominal ally

in Turkey, which is [yearning](#) for a peace between Ukraine and Russia, and orchestrate the greatest peace conference in decades.

Get all parties—including the Indians and Chinese—to come to the conference and achieve a negotiated settlement that cedes Eastern Ukraine and Crimea to the Russians while preserving the proto-democracy in Western Ukraine.

Then, make the division between Eastern and Western Ukraine the new line of control separating autocratic Eurasia from the democratic West. Spend the next several years resupplying, fortifying, and repairing Western Ukraine.

But if the Americans start introducing fighter jets into the war, as President Joe Biden foolishly said he would; or if the Russians follow through on their increasingly unhinged threats to use nuclear weapons—no matter how low-yield—on Ukrainian targets, the world will truly be engaged in an apocalyptic world war.

It is time for all sides to set aside their emotionalism, use the coldness of logic, and bring peace. Everyone has made their point. Both sides have been held to a point that prevents either from conquering the other.

Americans must now dust off their old “Let’s Make a Deal” game and prevent things from getting out-of-control, as they are at risk of getting. But time is not on anyone’s side.

Are there really any statesmen among us who’d have the gumption to risk their reputations and cushy MSNBC gigs to make a deal, or are they all Victoria Nuland-types?

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