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Toil & Trouble

One year of the once-unthinkable: Europe at war. Now what?



SHUTTERSTOCK/ GOODYSMILE STUDIO

CONTROLLING THE NARRATIVE

Russia's war in Ukraine started long before February 2022

BY GWENDOLYN SASSE

A whole year has passed since Russia launched its invasion into Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, a move that has since been recognized as a political *Zeitenwende* (watershed). War uproots our sense of time, and time has passed both quickly and painstakingly slowly since February 2022. Amid images of Russian war atrocities in Irpin, Bucha, Mariupol and elsewhere, time seems to have been suspended altogether. In historical terms, the German government's decision to send military assistance to Ukraine and German society's support for this decision mark a radical shift. But for Ukraine, each step along the way has been excruciatingly protracted. A type of warfare that seemed inconceivable to most Europeans has become an everyday reality. The initial shock runs the risk of becoming the new normal. It is our duty to remain alert as we listen, communicate and make tough policy decisions.

A lot has changed in the past year, but some things prove strangely persistent. First, there is terminology. Phrases like "the Ukraine war" or "conflict in Ukraine" are still frequently used in Western media and public discourse. Terminology matters, especially during war. The words we use to refer to something on a conscious and subconscious level shape our perceptions, the conclusions we draw and the actions we are willing to take as policymakers or accept as citizens. So, let's be as clear as can be: This is Russia's war against Ukraine. It is a war aimed at the destruction of the Ukrainian state and the Ukrainian nation. Russian President Vladimir Putin and the elites close to him have explicitly stated that, in their view, the Ukrainian state and an independent Ukrainian nation are artificial constructs. Russian

state rhetoric has moved on from evoking the myth of Ukraine as Russia's "little brother" to invoking a denial of Ukraine's right to exist.

Second, it is important to date this war correctly. The war did not start on Feb. 24, 2022 – although the phrase "when the war started..." is almost always linked to 2022. Russia's war in Ukraine began much earlier, with the occupation and annexation of Crimea in February and March of 2014. It continued with the conflict in the Donbas (2014–2022), where Russia intervened militarily from the very start, and then escalated into a full-scale invasion on Feb. 24, 2022. On this day, the Russian troops that had been amassing along the Russian-Ukrainian border since spring 2021 moved into Ukraine while air strikes were launched against cities across the country.

Russian tanks and trucks quickly lined the long roads to Kyiv and Kharkiv, but Russian military tactics and poorly prepared soldiers with little information or equipment at their disposal exposed the severe miscalculations at work. How could Russia have gotten things so wrong? Russian elites, above all Putin, seem truly to have believed that Russian troops would march into open arms among at least parts of the Ukrainian population, and that they could rapidly bring about regime change in Kyiv. In hindsight, this assumption is much more surprising than the military and civilian resistance put up by so many Ukrainians, which astonished people around the world. It seems that Putin and his inner circle had become trapped in their own propaganda. As far as we can glean from opinion polls and the accounts of journalists, Russian history, Russian politics and media saturation had also nurtured a lack of knowledge about, interest in or even empathy toward Ukrainians in Russian society.

In the first months after Feb. 24, there was a tendency – perhaps more so in Germany than elsewhere – to refer to the invasion as "Putin's war." This label highlighted the crucial role the Russian president plays in this war, but it also served to conceptually separate the Russian president from the system around him and from Russian society at large. However, an authoritarian leader like Putin cannot be separated from the political system he helped create and the society this system relies on for its legitimization. Yes, Putin as president and commander-in-chief gave the order to invade – just as he gave the order to occupy and annex Crimea and to ignite and sustain the war in parts of the Donbas region. But war is too complex a matter to be reduced to one person, even if he or she is at the core of a highly centralized and repressive authoritarian system. Putin is best understood as the catalyst who retaliated in a context of multiple interconnected developments. Calling Putin a catalyst in no way diminishes his role – a catalyst remains the critical element in explaining causation – but it does draw our attention to what enables the catalyst in the first place. A more nuanced explanation of this war is essential to understanding the policy mistakes made and our options for the future.

The key developments in this regard are the emergence of an increasingly authoritarian system in Russia, with its growing neo-imperial ambitions, and a trend toward democratization and westward-leaning ideas in Ukraine. This gap, underpinned by fundamentally different state identities that took decades to develop, marks the key axis along which this war is fought. At its core, Russia's war against Ukraine is a systemic conflict; it's not a war about territory or NATO enlargement, and it's not a proxy war. This is not to say that the war globally pits

democratic countries against authoritarian countries. That would be an oversimplification, as we can see from the breakdown of votes and abstentions on the UN resolutions concerning Russia's invasion of Ukraine and the range of countries benefiting from cheap Russian energy exports induced by Western sanctions. Moreover, in Africa and Latin America, we can see how European imperial legacies undermine solidarity with Ukraine and the West, while solid relations with Russia can function as an insurance policy in those regions with low levels of trust in Western countries.

The evolving relationship between Russia and the West has also shaped the potential for war. We see this in particular with regard to a widening discrepancy in perceptions of security and the growing contradictions in Western policies toward Russia. Security perceptions are not the same as actual security threats but, ultimately, perceptions can suffice to inform policy and mobilize elites and society. As for contradictory policies vis-à-vis Russia, Germany offers the clearest example. Berlin, on the one hand, took the lead in piecing together and maintaining the first EU-wide sanctions regime against Russia in the aftermath of the annexation of Crimea and the conflict in the Donbas. On the other, it pushed ahead with the Nord Stream 2 pipeline project, which bypassed Ukraine, thereby further entrenching Germany's overdependence on Russian gas. Such contradictions sent clear signals to the Kremlin. They highlighted divisions among Western allies, in particular within the EU, where Putin plays his long game of reinforcing existing divisions. These divisions and contradictions have provided Russia with considerable scope for action.

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OFFICIAL INTELLIGENCE

By Wolfgang Schmidt, Federal Minister for Special Tasks

The Munich Security Conference (MSC) is a unique forum for debating international security policy. Every year, numerous heads of state and government come together to discuss openly and constructively the world's most pressing security concerns.

A less well-known fact is that, since 2018, the MSC has also been bringing together heads of intelligence services for an exchange of ideas and for dialogue with decision-makers and government officials. At the MSC, intelligence is unequivocally seen as an inherent

part of foreign and security policy – and intelligence services as key actors in our security architecture. It provides a perfect stage for candid and informal discussions, and the large number of intelligence heads present at this year's conference is a great sign of appreciation for this unique forum of exchange.

The types of exchange and debate fostered at the MSC are key to advancing international cooperation. The past year has shown the immense value of this cooperation – between policymakers as well as intelligence services.

Prompted by Russia's invasion of Ukraine on Feb. 24, 2022, NATO, the European Union and the G7 showed great resolve to act in concert in response to Russian President Vladimir Putin's ruthless attack on the Ukrainian people. Their determination to cooperate closely manifested itself both in unprecedented sanctions imposed against the Russian regime and in military as well as financial support for Ukraine.

The intelligence services, for their part, showed a new quality of exchange of information starting

as early as November 2021. In the run-up to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, intelligence services repeatedly shared detailed information on Russia's plans for attack and, by doing so, spoiled Putin's attempts to spread lies to justify his actions.

Under these new circumstances, German intelligence services can build on sound cooperation at the international level, be it through bilateral cooperation, at the European level or at NATO.

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The push for peace

How to avoid another world war

BY HENRY A. KISSINGER

World War I was a kind of cultural suicide that destroyed Europe's eminence. Europe's leaders sleepwalked – in the phrase of historian Christopher Clark – into a conflict which none of them would have entered had they foreseen the world at war's end in 1918. In the previous decades, they had expressed their rivalries by creating two sets of alliances whose strategies had become linked by their respective schedules for mobilization. As a result, in 1914, the murder of the Austrian Crown Prince in Sarajevo, Bosnia, by a Serb nationalist was allowed to escalate into a general war that began when Germany executed its all-purpose plan to defeat France by attacking neutral Belgium at the other end of Europe.

The nations of Europe, insufficiently familiar with how technology had enhanced their respective military forces, proceeded to inflict unprecedented devastation on one another. In August 1916, after two years of war and millions in casualties, the principal combatants in the West (Britain, France and Germany) began to explore prospects for ending the carnage. In the East, rivals Austria and Russia had extended comparable feelers. Because no conceivable compromise could justify the sacrifices already incurred and because no one wanted to convey an impression of weakness, the various leaders hesitated to initiate a formal peace process. Hence they sought American mediation. Explorations by Colonel Edward House, US President Woodrow Wilson's personal emissary, revealed that a peace based on the modified status quo ante was within reach. However, Wilson, while willing and eventually eager to undertake mediation, delayed until after the presidential election in November. By then, the British Somme offensive and the German Verdun offensive had added another two million casualties.

In the words of the book on the subject by Philip Zelikow, diplomacy became the road less traveled. The Great War went on for two more years and claimed millions more victims, irretrievably damaging Europe's established equilibrium. Germany and Russia were rent by revolution; the Austro-Hungarian state disappeared from the map. France had been bled white. Britain had sacrificed a significant share of its young generation and of its economic



Walk and talk: Secretary of State Henry Kissinger and President Gerald Ford in 1974

capacities to the requirements of victory. The punitive Treaty of Versailles that ended the war proved far more fragile than the structure it replaced.

Does the world today find itself at a comparable turning point in Ukraine as winter imposes a pause on large-scale military

operations there? I have repeatedly expressed my support for the allied military effort to thwart Russia's aggression in Ukraine. But the time is approaching to build on the strategic changes that have already been accomplished and to integrate them into a new structure towards achieving peace through negotiation.

Ukraine has become a major state in Central Europe for the first time in modern history. Aided by its allies and inspired

by its President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, Ukraine has stymied the Russian conventional forces that have been overhanging Europe since World War II. And the international system – including China – is opposing Russia's threat or use of its nuclear weapons.

ceasefire line along the borders existing where the war started on Feb. 24. Russia would disgorge its conquests thence, but not the territory it occupied nearly a decade ago, including Crimea. That territory could be the subject of a negotiation after a ceasefire.

freedom of Ukraine and to define a new international structure, especially for Central and Eastern Europe. Eventually Russia should find a place in such an order.

The preferred outcome for some is a Russia rendered impotent by the war. I disagree. For all its propensity to violence, Russia

UKRAINE HAS BECOME A MAJOR STATE IN CENTRAL EUROPE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MODERN HISTORY

This process has mooted the original issues regarding Ukraine's membership in NATO. Ukraine has acquired one of the largest and most effective land armies in Europe, equipped by the US and its allies. A peace process should link Ukraine to NATO, however expressed. The alternative of neutrality is no longer meaningful, especially after Finland and Sweden join NATO. This is why, last May, I recommended establishing a

If the pre-war dividing line between Ukraine and Russia cannot be achieved by combat or by negotiation, recourse to the principle of self-determination could be explored. Internationally supervised referendums concerning self-determination could be applied to particularly divisive territories that have changed hands repeatedly over the centuries.

The goal of a peace process would be twofold: to confirm the

has made decisive contributions to the global equilibrium and to the balance of power for over half a millennium. Its histori-

HENRY KISSINGER

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cal role should not be degraded. Russia's military setbacks have not eliminated its global nuclear reach, enabling it to threaten escalation in Ukraine. Even if this capability is diminished, the dissolution of Russia or destroying its ability for strategic policy could turn its territory encompassing 11 time zones into a contested vacuum. Its competing societies might decide to settle their disputes by violence. Other countries might seek to expand their claims by force. All these dangers would be compounded by the presence of thousands of nuclear weapons that make Russia one of the world's two largest nuclear powers.

As the world's leaders strive to end the war in which two nuclear powers contest a conventionally armed country, they should also reflect on the impact on this conflict and on long-term strategy of incipient high-technology and artificial intelligence. Autonomous weapons already exist, capable of defining, assessing and targeting their own perceived threats and thus in a position to start their own war.

Once the line into this realm is crossed and hi-tech becomes standard weaponry – and computers become the principal executors of strategy – the world will find itself in a condition for which as yet it has no established concept. How can leaders exercise control when computers prescribe strategic instructions on a scale and in a manner that inherently limits and threatens human input? How can civilization be preserved amid such a maelstrom of conflicting information, perceptions and destructive capabilities?

No theory for this encroaching world yet exists, and consultative efforts on this subject have yet to evolve – perhaps because meaningful negotiations might disclose new discoveries, and that disclosure itself constitutes a risk for the future. Overcoming the disjunction between advanced technology and the concept of strategies for controlling it, or even understanding its full implications, is as important an issue today as climate change, and it requires leaders with a command of both technology and history.

The quest for peace and order has two components that are sometimes treated as contradictory: the pursuit of elements of security and the requirement for acts of reconciliation. If we cannot achieve both, we will not be able to reach either. The road of diplomacy may appear complicated and frustrating. But progress to it requires both the vision and the courage to undertake the journey.

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We shall prevail

By Wolfgang Ischinger, Executive Editor



Dear readers of *The Security Times*, dear speakers,

participants, partners and supporters of the MSC,

At the invitation of publisher Detlef Prinz, I have stepped into the very big shoes of Ted Sommer (see page 27), whose passing last year we continue to mourn.

Under Ted's leadership, *The Security Times* developed into a

highly useful source of information and inspiration for all those present at our annual flagship Munich Security Conference (MSC) event.

After 15 years piloting the MSC, this is the first year in which I no longer carry operational responsibility. Christoph Heusgen and the MSC team, headed by Benedikt Franke, have done an top-notch job organizing the first post-pandemic conference. We expect more than 40 heads of state and government, and approximately 100 foreign

ministers, defense ministers and heads of international organizations – we're going to have a capacity crowd!

The ongoing success story of the MSC fills me with enormous pride as I continue to serve as President of the MSC Foundation Council.

Over the last decade and a half, our success has been built on three elements in particular:

- Our independence – no single sponsor or partner is allowed to contribute more than 10 percent to our overall budget.

- Our effort to embrace the broadest possible definition of security, including climate security, global health security, energy security and other transnational security issues.

- Maintaining a strong trans-Atlantic link as the backbone of MSC activities, while reaching out more and more to other parts of the world, including to China, India and other countries of the Global South.

Finally, the 2023 gathering is the first Munich Security Conference obliged to focus on a

war in the heart of Europe – the Russian war of aggression in Ukraine. Last year, at the 2022 MSC, I had the privilege of welcoming Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy, literally four days before the Russian invasion began. It is my sincere hope that our discussions this year in Munich will produce ideas and initiatives to help end this war sooner rather than later. If, as we all hope, Ukraine prevails, the next big strategic challenge will be how to exercise restraint in victory.

Vulgar villains

The threat posed by right-wing forces across the globe is as real as it was 100 years ago

BY CLAUS LEGGEWIE

Two of the key hopes that emerged from the epoch-shifting *Zeitenwende* of 1989 have become mere illusions: The first involved hopes of a peace dividend generated by the end of the East-West conflict, and the second involved hopes of a deepened democratization across global society. As we now know, the number of free and democratically governed nations in the world has been in steady decline since 2000, and today, after Russia's invasion of Ukraine, the Cold War has given way to a heated escalation of the East-West conflict. At the moment, it looks as if the only way to stop the spread of autocracies is by supporting regime change in Moscow (and Beijing) through outside intervention. These are the realities of our current situation: not disarmament, but rearmament; not the spread of civil society, but defensive confrontation; and not *One World* – the concept of humanity living together in common and mutual responsibility – but the *Axis of Evil*.

Although Russia's battle-thirsty president can by no means claim victory after a full year of war and destruction in Ukraine, he has nevertheless been able to forge a negative coalition against the collective West. While there are only a handful of countries standing directly at his side, including Belarus, Eritrea, Iran, North Korea and Syria, there are other so-called non-aligned countries, such as Algeria, Bolivia, China, Cuba, India, Pakistan and South Africa, standing only slightly further away. Each of these nations has its own particular motives for rejecting the West, and each seeks to achieve some kind of boost to their respective position, not least of which is the advantage garnered from higher oil and gas prices. It would appear that the goal of weakening the world order led by the US and the EU is, for these nations, more important than condemning imperial annexation, even though they themselves once engaged in violent resistance to similar forms of annexation, in some cases in the form of anti-colonial liberation fronts. Erdogan's "seesaw policy" in Turkey, a NATO member country, is a case in point, as is the Chinese strategy of consolidating its own imperial ambitions in the slipstream of this "regional" war. For its part, India, the world's largest democracy, risks losing its way in a fever dream of Hindu extremism fueled by the Indian prime minister himself.

There is also palpable ambivalence among some of the 141 nations that condemned Russian aggression in a UN General Assembly vote on March 2, 2022. In a number of cases, a policy of indulgence towards Russia correlates with the rise of right-wing tendencies in democratic nations themselves. For the past two decades, Putin has been preparing for war by working on the domestic front to undermine the rule of law, obstruct free and fair elections, enforce conformity among independent media and strip science and art of authority. And it is precisely this ambition that drives his deceitful disinformation campaigns abroad, most importantly via social networks. The objective of these policies is to destabilize parliamentary institutions by means of right-wing (and to some extent also left-wing-populist) movements and parties. Governments such as that of Georgia Meloni, the neo-Fascist Prime Minister of Italy, and Poland's PiS party, both of which have sided with

Ukraine, are merely exceptions that prove the rule. In Hungary as well as in France, Brazil and the US, pro-Russia groups, including the AfD in Germany, support the extreme right. We can justifiably define this "international league" as belonging to the group of Putin collaborators.

Putin's key adversary is not Ukraine. His enemies are the United States and the European Union, the latter of which he considers to be a vassal of the US. If and when Brussels' ability to act in concert is hindered by veto players like Viktor Orbán and possibly also Marine Le Pen, Europe will not be able to function as the powerful and effective defense community it strives to be. The result of this would be the decline of the EU's attractiveness to states from the former Soviet bloc – which Putin is clearly seeking to restore. And this effect would be even more pronounced if Donald Trump or a Trump-like figure were to take office in Washington in 2024, and especially if this leader were to engage in an isolationist foreign policy and end up sabotaging NATO. At this point, at the latest, there would

lout back in the president's office. And in spite of support from Russian-sponsored Telegram and TikTok accounts, the *Reichsbürger* group's attempted storming of the Bundestag in Berlin was set in motion by domestic groups drawn from an anti-democratic, right-wing movement. In Germany, roughly ten percent of the electorate continues to elect this group into office, and their ideas are espoused by far more people who show up in even larger numbers in some regions for their regular "walks." This is the name used today to describe these marches, which look more like school field trips compared to the far more militant rallies instigated by black- and brown shirts one hundred years ago. This is in no way to imply that the rallies of today are harmless; the exponential degree of coverage they receive in the media makes them potentially even more dangerous.

Anyone who classifies these movements as consisting of "confused" people – whether downplaying them as having "lost their way" or ennobling them as "concerned citizens" – has not yet recognized the true nature of the

of Putin, whose Stalinist regime and fascist mobilization are designed to restore an irretrievable empire. Back in 1991, Albert O. Hirschman referred to this reactionary approach as a type of "thinking in opposition to the future," that is, arguing against reform or any change in the status quo. Today, the representatives of this intransigence are making a clarion call for action.

It was Hirschman, too, who once identified three ways of articulating discontent: loyalty, exit and voice. Today, loyalty to democratic processes, institutions and elites is being renounced en masse and increasingly replaced by non-parliamentary "exiters" and enraged citizens spewing vitriol against the powers that be. Unlike the protest movements of the 1970s, today's reactionary milieu is not united by ideology, voter mobilization or economic interests; instead, they come together solely to emit a resounding "No!" The individuals known in Germany as *Querdenker*, (lateral thinkers) – a term initially meant as a compliment – stem from a wide array of groupings, including esoteric-anthroposoph-

The illiberal delusion these groups share is rooted in a laughably exaggerated need for self-defense. They argue that they aren't the ones who are increasingly radical, violent and prepared to murder for their cause, even though this is evident at their marches and in their confrontations with the media, medical personnel and the police. Instead, they argue that it's "the political powers that be," "science" and "the media" that are driving them into a corner. The slogan of the Brexiteers – a group that abandoned all reason – was "take back control," with the idea being that British citizens should reclaim power over their own lives. With all this in mind, it is not just Putin's war that should worry us, but in equal measure the reaction of Western political forces to it.

These *Querdenker* – who are less "lateral" thinkers than people who simply don't think at all – are not concerned with achieving positive change, let alone with creating a new society, even a neo-fascist one. They are also apathetic about eliminating social injustice, even though their arguments sometimes invoke

Fridays for Future's attempts to draw attention to climate change, Women's Lib's fight for equality and LGBTQ+'s and BLM's struggle for the recognition of gender-based and ethnic minorities, the right-wing naysayers are concerned solely with the truculent assertion of individual disobedience. In other words, in political terms, their movement is about – nothing. They cannot even claim the height that would permit, in a Nietzschean sense, a dramatic hero's fall. But they do adopt the approach described by Nietzsche as one that "not only denies, means denial, but – dreadful thought! – practices denial." This is an all-encompassing rejection of all conceivable values: it knows no authority (except the charlatans currently dominating the scene), trusts no established institution (except its own filter bubble) and brooks no representation other than its own supposedly oppressed group of victims. Unfortunately, this trend has also taken hold of left-wing identity politics; indeed, it's sometimes easy to believe they think using the correct vocabulary when speaking about racist and sexist tendencies is more important than social justice and cultural colorblindness.

The mission to bring this powerful self-perpetuating right-wing force to a standstill is the Herculean task currently facing liberal parties and left-wing movements across the globe. Achieving this task requires a greater ability – both internally and externally – to resist and oppose Trumpism and Putinism. The left will also have to give up its hush-hushed acceptance of the defects and deficits of representative democracy: corruption, lack of transparency, state failures in everyday life, the anomie of migrant communities and a lack of vigilance in the face of Islamist terror. Another deficit is a clear and public political statement that the war in Ukraine is going to last a long time and require even far greater sacrifices than to date. There is also a lack of defensive capacity on the part of armies and security agencies, including against Islamist terror. After decades of cozy deals with potential enemies, this is something we've been forced to acknowledge and can no longer deny. Possessing a higher level of combat readiness is not inconsistent with the necessary "diplomatic efforts."

The problem is that these efforts cannot currently rely on Russia; instead, they should be directed at forging an anti-Putin coalition in the "global south." This coalition might be as heterogeneous as the anti-Hitler coalition against the Axis powers of 1941, and it could, just like its predecessor, hold the potential for success. And let's not forget that China, India and other G20-states also have no interest in a permanent disruption of world trade.

In the wake of our most recent epoch-shifting *Zeitenwende* of 2022, we harbor two great hopes that we simply cannot give up. The first is for the peace dividend that would emerge from our transformation to a sustainable global society that can work in unison to curtail climate change and species extinction and thereby find a way back to taking action in solidarity. The second hope is for the re-democratization of those autocracies and theocracies that have revealed their utter inferiority and incompetence with regard to key problems, as seen, for example, by China's failure to contain Covid-19. We might even dare to hope that this kind of transformative change will extend into Russian society and bring it back into the community of peoples.

PUTIN'S KEY ADVERSARY IS NOT UKRAINE. HIS ENEMIES ARE THE UNITED STATES AND THE EUROPEAN UNION, THE LATTER OF WHICH HE CONSIDERS TO BE A VASSAL OF THE US

be nothing standing in the way of Russian and Chinese imperialism. Of course, democratic governments that have come to power through free and fair elections will not take this path; they will continue to exercise their international responsibility and engage in cooperation, while Putin will continue to rely on the aforementioned collaborators to continue fueling doubt and distrust.

In other words, there is a profound connection between Russia's decision to wage war in Ukraine and the erosion of Western liberal democracies. This is not to argue that the gradual loss of legitimacy among liberal democracies is due entirely to some kind of external conspiracy; when democracies languish and die, it is usually primarily the result of some kind of internal fatigue or self-harm. It was not Putin alone who instigated the mob that stormed the US Capitol on Jan. 6, 2021; responsibility for that attack lies above all with Donald Trump, who sought to reverse his electoral defeat. And Russia wasn't behind the attempted coup in Brazil two years later; that attack was almost entirely the work of Jair Bolsonaro's unwavering followers, who sought to put that political

threat they embody. The danger of a radical right-wing overthrow – that is, of a conservative revolution rooted in anti-Semitism, toxic masculinity and white supremacist ideology – is just as real today as it was 100 years ago. Some experts like to differentiate between neo-Fascist groups and their supposedly harmless followers, who are credited with having more than just a "strictly right-wing worldview." This may be true, but it can also be seen as presenting an even greater risk. The power of neo-Fascists lies in their cultural impact on a growing number of political nihilists who are not committed to any particular worldview and do not belong to any particular organization; instead, these individuals have an equally deep contempt for liberal modernity, democracy and its associated presumptions. Today, in an era marked by multiple concurrent crises – the pandemic, climate change, war, objectively justified fears of inflation and the loss of social status – we can feel the collective nervousness that has preceded all counterrevolutions in history. Faced with this long list of crises, right-wing groups engage in the mystification of the past in a manner similar to that

ical circles, green-alternative life reformers, unorganized right-wing radicals, Christian fundamentalist sectarians, opponents of large-scale urban-industrial projects and critics of nuclear energy. In Eastern Germany, these groups often see themselves as the self-appointed successors to the former GDR's citizens' movement, regularly insisting that they are *das Volk* (the people) at their Monday demonstrations and PEGIDA marches.

The mindset of these groups is often based on a combination of conspiracy theories and racist or anti-Semitic leanings. The advent of the Covid-19 pandemic only bolstered their convictions; their deep skepticism and rejection of vaccine mandates even served to unite groups that were otherwise antagonistic toward one another. They bonded over their dislike of a powerful enemy – the state – which in their minds seeks only to rob people of their basic freedoms.

CLAUS LEGGEWIE is the Ludwig Börne Professor at the Justus Liebig University of Giessen (JLU) and initiator of the JLU's Panel on Planetary Thinking.



SHUTTERSTOCK/ANTALALEXA

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Controlling the narrative

Lastly, the years-long escalation in Russia's war against Ukraine gave both Western powers and Russia the time to adapt mentally and in practical terms to developments. Russia adjusted its economy in order to mitigate the impact of the EU's initial sanctions. For its part, the West grew too accepting of a new political reality in which the annexation of Crimea, though not recognized by international law, was accepted as the de facto status quo. Similarly, the war in the Donbas could not be resolved on the basis of the Minsk I and II agreements, and Russia's control over territories in the region was tacitly accepted. Together, these very different developments increased the likelihood of war, and enabled Putin to engage in escalation.

One of the biggest surprises in the last year has been the resistance waged by the Ukrainian military and civilians. The nature of the escalation of Feb. 24, 2022, including the air strikes that hit cities across the country's territory, along with President Volodymyr Zelensky powerful move to reject the offer of a safe exit and embrace the role of

a wartime leader, immediately mobilized nearly all Ukrainians. But longer-term developments, overlooked or underestimated by most Western observers, explain the power of Ukraine's sustained bottom-up resistance. Ukraine is a country that has gone through several cycles of mass mobilization, in particular the Orange Revolution of 2004 and the Euromaidan in 2013–2014. Protests like these are rare phenomena. Their repeated occurrence, with hundreds of thousands of protesters in the streets, are even more rare. Such events imprint themselves on a society's DNA and have long-lasting effects that reach beyond a leadership change at the top. They come with a set of experiences, and they shape attitudes and expectations. They create networks among activists but also among ordinary citizens; they strengthen trust in others and become reference points in a country's collective memory. Framed in inclusive and rights-based terms, Ukraine's mass mobilizations contributed significantly to a sense of a Ukrainian civic duty and identity. Over the years, including those shaped by the Covid-19 pandemic, opinion polls recorded a remarkable increase in civic engagement in the form of volunteering as well

as a rise in pro-democracy views. This stands in stark contrast to developments in many established democracies.

This type of engagement extends beyond the already high density of institutionalized Ukrainian NGOs and presents an important resource for the bottom-up mobilization of society. The country's ongoing decentralization, which gave local governments new responsibilities and incentives through budgetary powers, and the experience of the Covid-19 pandemic further honed bottom-up initiatives. The exposure to war since 2014 had compelled previous Ukrainian governments to invest in the modernization of the Ukrainian army. Already prior to 2022, Russia had forced the experience of war and displacement upon a sizeable part of the population. These experiences, coupled with an existential threat to their state as a whole, served to prepare Ukrainians for their biggest test yet. Ukrainian society quickly channeled its abilities to self-organize and mobilize into defense and resilience. Tests of societal resilience are difficult to predict before an extreme event takes place, but in the case of Ukraine, the tools needed to act with profound defiance were clearly in place.

Bearing witness to this profound resilience and the all-too apparent weaknesses of Russian tactics were important factors behind the West's rethinking its commitment to provide Ukraine financial and military support. It is fair to say that without the US government's quick and substantial military assistance, it's unlikely that Ukraine would have been able to reconquer territory in the offensives in Kharkiv and Kherson regions in autumn 2022. For NATO's Central and Eastern European members, providing Ukraine military support is a non-negotiable aspect of their own defense. By contrast, the governments of western NATO countries have tried to assure their populations that they are not and will not be directly involved in this war. In the West, it is increasingly difficult to cultivate a political consensus for each new decision involving stepped-up military support.

The dichotomy between the political systems of Ukraine and Russia is also reflected in the way both countries fight this war. The contrast in their communication strategies could not be starker. Whereas Putin has opted to deliver only the occasional speech, recorded at his old-style office desk, Zelensky

has addressed his fellow citizens on a daily basis since Feb. 24, both from the seat of government and from other locations. He frequently communicates via social media, including self-recorded mobile phone messages. He broadcasts potentially dangerous visits to the frontline and recently de-occupied territories. Through virtual meetings, he maintains close links with world leaders and delivers speeches to international institutions, foreign parliaments, universities and other organizations. He continuously presents himself as one Ukrainian citizen of many as well as a member of a larger government team, rather than the leader who makes all the decisions by himself. Large numbers of Ukrainians are actively involved – if they are not fighting in the army or territorial defense units, they are crowdfunding for military equipment or generators and engaging in a wide range of self-help initiatives. By contrast, Russian society has for the most part remained passive, accepting or even supporting the “special military operation” as presented by state media outlets. The Russian army relies on its sheer dominance in terms of equipment and manpower, and the Russian leadership is clearly willing to recruit and use insufficiently

trained personnel as it quashes the truth about the war and its costs. The Russian army command structures have remained strictly hierarchical, whereas the Ukrainian army employs more flexible command structures able to adjust more adeptly to the situation at hand. Little can be done to improve the low morale of the Russian soldiers; Ukrainian soldiers know what they are fighting for.

A full year into Russia's full-scale invasion, an end to this war is not in sight. The Ukrainians are not in a position to negotiate, and the Russian leadership lacks the political will to negotiate. When Putin or his spokesperson talk about the possibility of negotiations, they aim only to confuse Western audiences as they demonize Ukraine and the West for continuing to fight. The sad reality is that any negotiations on a “freezing” of the frontline can now have only one effect: providing Russia time to regroup for a new attack on Ukraine in the near future. This is the main lesson of the ongoing three-stage war begun in 2014.

The fact that Zelensky put a lot on the table for negotiations in the early days and weeks of the current fighting is often forgotten. In return for security guarantees, he offered to return to the line of contact (as of Feb. 23, 2022) in the Donbas, table the issue of Crimea for 15 years and commit to neutrality. However, since the atrocities waged in Irpin, Bucha and Mariupol, Zelensky and Ukrainian society have turned against accepting any territorial concessions. Opinion polls regularly show a consensus on refusing such compromises and the will to reconquer Crimea. Zelensky has adapted his approach to negotiations to the dynamics of the war and can be expected to continue doing so.

However impressive Ukraine's political and societal resilience has been, this alone will not suffice to ensure its survival; everything depends on what type of military assistance arrives ahead of an expected Russian offensive in spring and on a long-term Western commitment to military and financial assistance. One year on, a political consensus on stepping up assistance remains a fragile one – in both Europe and the US.

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Paint it black: Putin mural in Kashira near Moscow.

Continued from Page 1

Official intelligence

The Federal Intelligence Service (BND) alone, for example, is in contact with around 450 intelligence services in over 160 countries and values its cooperation with its partners world-wide.

As the war continues, sharing intelligence remains of crucial importance, in particular for detecting false flag operations that serve Russia's interests. This partly even includes making information gathered by intelligence services, which is traditionally reserved for the eyes of key decision-makers only, available to the public.

More cooperation rather than less – this is an outcome few would have expected from a war waged at Europe's eastern flank. Twelve months into Russia's war against Ukraine, Putin has not managed to divide the coalition of countries supporting Ukraine. He assumed that the “collective West” and its democracies were weak, unstable and easily manipulated into distrusting their elected leaders. He underestimated the capability of democratic leaders to take responsibility for bold decisions and ensure their citizens' sup-

port in the long run. Citizens in democracies might just prove to be more resilient – precisely because their leaders are expected to explain themselves in order to gain their support.

This concept of explaining decisions to a critical audience and tolerating dissent is, of course, very far from Putin's own understanding of governing. A prominent member of the international intelligence community recently commented that in Russia, “it is not a career-enhancing moment to tell the president the truth.” This naturally leads to poor political decision-making as policy choices are based on a selection of facts deemed acceptable to President Putin.

Gaining his citizens' support for his course and making sure people trust his decisions on their behalf has been one of German Chancellor Olaf Scholz' most important tasks in the past year. He is aware of the responsibility he carries as citizens hope and expect that their chancellor keeps his nerve.

In democracies, democratic control is vital in order to ensure citizens' trust in the decisions of their elected leaders. This must, of course, also hold true for the work of the intelligence services. Germany's three federal intelligence

services – the Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution (Bundesamt für Verfassungsschutz, BfV), the Federal Intelligence Service (Bundesnachrichtendienst, BND) and the Military Counter-Intelligence Service (Militärischer Abschirmdienst, BAMAD) – are rooted firmly in a system of parliamentary and governmental control, executed by the Parliamentary Oversight Panel and other entities.

Having to justify their work vis-à-vis control bodies has significantly enhanced the quality and constitutional compliance of the intelligence

services' work. What is more, the oversight bodies also keep track of cross-service cooperation in order to prevent duplicate structures and to leverage synergies – thereby further encouraging effective burden-sharing and a joint approach of the services.

While democratic control of the German intelligence services guarantees public oversight of the services' operations, trust in their capabilities and constitutional compliance can also be fostered by systematically reaching out to the broader intelligence community. To this end, Chancellor Scholz' government committed to expanding cooperation with the science community, think tanks and other

actors in the strategic community in its coalition agreement.

Just as important as ensuring quality and control of the intelligence services, however, is the ability of the services to present their insights to decision-makers. Formats at the interface of security authorities and decision-makers – such as the well-established weekly intelligence briefings between key actors from the security community and the heads of the three German intelligence services at the Federal Chancellery – serve this goal. At the same time, such formats ensure strategic cooperation between the three intelligence services.

To make this cooperation sustainable in nature, the intelligence services are further encouraged to conduct a joint threat assessment that is used as a basis for cross-service overall analyses. The resulting picture can then also serve as a basis for a renewed division of labor between the services.

WOLFGANG SCHMIDT the Federal Minister for Special Tasks, is also Head of the Federal Chancellery and Commissioner for the Federal Intelligence Services.

The last year has brought fundamental changes that our government could not have foreseen when delivering our oath of office on Dec. 8, 2021. With less than 100 days in office and just three days after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Chancellor Olaf Scholz addressed the German Bundestag, calling this moment in history a *Zeitenwende*, a watershed moment marking a turning point that fundamentally separates the before from the after.

For Germany, this meant departing from some longstanding habits and decade-old principles.

In his speech at the Bundestag, the chancellor announced a special fund of €100 billion for the armed forces, promised to end dependency on Russian gas and agreed to send weapons to a conflict zone – with every single one of these measures signifying a substantive shift in policy.

In the months that followed, the German government continued to send a strong message of support to the Ukrainian people. Germany showed that it was a reliable partner and willing to lead in lock-step with its allies in all areas, extending from sanctions against Russia, weapons deliveries and aid pack-

ages to Ukraine, to the intake of Ukrainian refugees. In its latest decision and after careful consideration, Germany agreed in January 2023 that “Leopard 2” main battle tanks will be sent to Ukraine.

At the same time, Germany decreased its reliance on Russian gas imports within months – from pre-war levels of 55 percent to 0. It diversified its energy imports, extended the use of renewable energy sources and rapidly sped up planning processes. In less than twelve months, Germany managed to build two LNG terminals, when it formerly had none. And Germany continues to accelerate the energy transformation that aims for the country to be net zero by 2045 – an undertaking that is all the more urgent in light of Russia's war against Ukraine.

The crisis of the past year has shown what Germany is capable of. And we know precisely what needs to be done for the country to come back stronger from this crisis. If anything, the *Zeitenwende* has left Germany more determined to foster trust in its international alliances, to reach out more decisively to other leaders and partners and to assume responsibility by becoming unwaveringly future-proof.



Can't spell Ukraine without UK: British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy at a military facility in Lulworth, Dorset, England, Feb. 8, 2023.

PICTURE ALLIANCE / ASSOCIATED PRESS | PETER NICHOLS

Prevention possible

The UK's role in international security – doing more to understand and inhibit aggression

BY PATRICIA LEWIS

The arrival of Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in London on Feb. 8 was a demonstration of the leading role that the UK has played in Europe's support for Ukraine and the international resistance to an expansionist Russia. The UK's main partners in Europe have tended to find themselves led – sometimes reluctantly – by a committed United States and an enthusiastic United Kingdom. Former UK Prime Minister Boris Johnson has continued to visit Kyiv and drum up support for Ukraine's application to join NATO and current Prime Minister Rishi Sunak was at the center of the visit and has now placed himself carefully in the vanguard of support. The Leader of the Opposition and the Labour Party, Sir Keir Starmer, has been thoroughly briefed and has consistently supported the government's decisions in the war. Russia's illegal war against Ukraine has not only united the West – and specifically NATO – but also the UK's political parties, which would be considered in some circles to be an even more impressive feat.

Although support for Ukraine among the British population remains strong, it should not be taken for granted. The UK is going through more turbulent economic weather than many of its neighbors – undoubtedly as a result of the triple whammy of the war, Covid-19 and Brexit – in which the rising costs of living, triggering industrial action, are exacerbating its woes. Despite the war and new requirements, the defense budget is under continual strain and Defence Secretary Ben Wallace is having to make choices that place an increasing emphasis on technology and smart weaponry, and Russia's behavior in Ukraine is further fueling that drive. Enhanced interoperability, speedier procurement and training across the forces of NATO allies and partners have always been understood to be important; now they are critical.

Since the decision to exit the European Union, the UK has been grappling with enormous change.

In March 2021, the UK set out its new approach to security, defense, development and foreign policy in the Integrated Review: "Global Britain in a competitive age," accompanied by the Defence Command Paper and the Defence Industrial Strategy.

The analysis of the international competitive environment and the range of threats and insecurities within the Integrated Review (IR) were prescient. The IR identified Russia as the most acute threat to security in the Euro-Atlantic region and China's growing international stature as the most significant geopolitical factor for the international order in the long term. The IR also addressed the changing nature and distribution of global power and identified four overarching, interconnected trends of particular importance:

1. Geopolitical and geo-economic shifts – including the growing importance of the Indo-Pacific.
2. Intensified systemic competition that is resulting in a growing contest over international rules, norms, values and behavior.
3. Rapid technological change – including space, AI and quantum technologies.
4. Transnational challenges such as climate change that threaten humanity's shared security and require collective, multilateral cooperation.

The UK's response to these threats is framed in the short and in the longer terms. In the long term, the UK has identified investment in science and technology as being fundamental to long-term capabilities and prosperity and has laid out the ambition to be one of the leading sci-tech countries. In the shorter term, the UK has focused on supporting Ukraine along with allies in

preparation for further Russian aggression, including in cyber defense – a strategy that reaped significant dividends in helping fend off the many cyberattacks that have taken place in the last year or more as part of the Russian attacks.

In early 2023, the government will issue a "refresh" to the Integrated Review (and the accompanying Defence Command and Industrial Strategy papers) on the grounds that the challenges have grown. According to the House of Commons Foreign Affairs Committee: "While the blame for the war in Ukraine lies solely with Vladimir Putin, the failure of the West sufficiently to challenge Putin's incursion into Georgia in 2008, his annexation of Crimea and parts of the Donbas in 2014 and his sponsorship of state mur-

ders in the UK in 2006 and 2018 undoubtedly emboldened him.... Greater and clearer-sighted prescience could also have enabled the UK and her allies to prepare better for the oil, gas and food supply problems that would inevitably result from a lengthy war in Ukraine, thereby weakening Putin's hand...." The general sense is that the refresh will be an update based on lessons learned from recent events rather than a major overhaul.

The IR Refresh ought to examine what could have been done to help prevent the war. Of course, only the Putin government can be held to blame and to account for the illegal war against Ukraine, but it would be foolhardy not to consider what could have dissuaded Russia, for example: stronger, more resolute messaging so that Putin was not so falsely emboldened; more credible deterrence postures; more resilience – and communicated resilience

– against energy shocks; and consequences for the murderous use of chemical and radiological weapons on UK territory.

Lessons from an analysis of what could have been done to prevent the war will help NATO, along with allies in other parts of the world that are ridden with violent conflict or that could be on the verge of war, to put measures in place that will help reduce the risks of and increase the barriers to outbreaks of major violence. Such analysis will also assist in ways to move forward if, and when, a ceasefire or peace treaty is agreed with Russia. The illegal invasions of Ukraine have demonstrated the importance of cooperation with European partners on regional security issues and, despite Brexit, the UK would be well positioned for closer cooperation with the

For example, NATO Allies are carefully attempting to calibrate the type and amount of military support they are supplying to Ukraine. Ukraine and Western states have adhered to international law and norms in terms of the types of weaponry they have employed and supplied – only Russia has used banned weapons such as cluster munitions and only Russia has made threats to use nuclear weapons. The decision to supply tanks has taken the best part of a year and there remains a great deal of caution over the requests from Ukraine to supply airpower. Manufacturing UK weapons in Ukraine under license could present a longer-term solution for Ukraine and this mechanism could be adopted by other countries. Drone warfare – both in terms of data collection

powered submarine provided by the US and the UK. It is likely that announcements will be made in March 2023 regarding some of the key details of the submarine build – including the ways in which a non-proliferation element will be incorporated to ensure that nuclear materials cannot be diverted for purposes related to nuclear weaponry.

But the other aspects of AUKUS, specifically the commitment to collaborate on advanced technologies – such as cyber-tech, semi-conductors, space technologies, AI/machine learning and quantum technologies such as quantum sensors, quantum communications and quantum computing – have yet to be fully fleshed out in the public domain. Other economies, for example Japan and Korea, will likely want to participate in some aspects of AUKUS. New Zealand and Canada – for quite different reasons – will also be keen to see how their involvement in the Five Eyes alliance will impact AUKUS.

While beating back Russia and preventing a Europe-wide war that involves NATO and all the associated risks remains the urgent and therefore top priority for the UK, Europe and the trans-Atlantic alliance, understanding how to live with a highly energetic, perhaps domestically turbulent China should not be put off for later. Working out how to co-exist with a large, hostile military power in the Pacific is occupying a significant part of the US hive-mind. The UK will want to play its part with the US – as will Europe. Deterring China from active conflict, be it over Taiwan, DPRK, the South China Seas or even – in the longer run (but not as long as people might like to imagine) – the Arctic, will require an understanding of the ways in which China is thinking, how much it wants peaceful coexistence and how to persuade and dissuade for mutual gain. The US, Europe and the Atlantic Alliance failed to do just that with Russia – despite decades of operating in the same neighborhood, with overlapping cultures and languages. We must get better at the understanding and prevention part, or we won't have a chance of succeeding with China. ■

DESPITE BREXIT, THE UK WOULD BE WELL POSITIONED FOR CLOSER COOPERATION WITH THE EU AND OTHER EUROPEAN COUNTRIES, THROUGH BOTH MINI-LATERAL AND BILATERAL MECHANISMS

EU and other European countries, through both mini-lateral and bilateral mechanisms.

The international community has been collecting and analyzing data on conflict and conflict prevention over decades. Like the medical world over a century ago, when disease prevention became part of the approach in which people could support their health, the international community is beginning to understand what would prevent war and, rather than wait until it erupts and only then seek impossible, urgent cures, measure what will likely decrease the urge to begin hostilities, continue a drawn-out conflict and help prevent the worst effects of war.

PATRICIA LEWIS leads the International Security Programme at Chatham House, a London-based international affairs think tank.

and targeting as well as armed or explosive drones – has been a major feature of the war and this is likely to increase, as is the supply of data from satellites and the increasing role of outer space in the war.

In terms of surveillance, although China's ambitions in terms of regional hegemony, military capabilities and geopolitics are increasingly clear, China is not characterized at the level of a "threat" to the UK. It is possible that this will be revised in the IR Refresh. China's increasing hostility towards the status quo over Taiwan is increasing concerns about a regional conflict between two large nuclear armed states.

AUKUS – the new collaboration among Australia, the UK and the US – caused a major disturbance on its announcement in September 2021, as it involved the decision by Australia to end a contract for a French diesel-powered submarine in favor of a nuclear-

Xi's wiz

Imagining that US and Chinese mutual understanding can allow all sides to flourish



Charm: offensive? US President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the G20 summit, Nov. 14, 2022.

PICTURE ALLIANCE / REUTERS | RICARDO ARDUENGO

BY KEVIN RUDD

For the first time in decades, the citizens of the world are confronting the reality that the prospect of crisis, confrontation and war between the global superpowers is in fact conceivable. Even five years ago, the notion of the United States and China stumbling into military conflict seemed absurd given the depth and breadth of engagement across the strategic, diplomatic and economic dimensions of their relationship. This is no longer the case. It is therefore time to calmly reassess the actual dangers of a potential conflict that might be sparked amid the roiling (and as yet unmanaged) strategic competition between the US and China.

Over time, the political and diplomatic insulation around the live wires of the US-China relationship has been stripped away. Amid such circumstances, the risk of tumbling into war by mistake or miscalculation becomes much more pronounced. Such conflict – even if it were to start modestly – could rapidly escalate into a catastrophic situation for both parties, their allies and the world at large.

Despite the fatalism of some commentary, I do not accept that crisis, conflict and war are inevitable. For this reason, I have titled my recent book *The Avoidable War*. I continue to believe that neither side intends to go to war with the other. And yet, for the decade ahead, we see a real (and growing) risk of unintentional crisis, conflict, escalation and war. Fundamentally, this is because both countries are locked into a new form of strategic competition for regional, and eventually global, supremacy. China seeks the “great rejuvenation” of its nation – for more on that, see my article for the November-December

issue of Foreign Affairs – while the United States intends to remain the most powerful nation on earth and the continuing fulcrum of the international order it constructed from the rubble of World War II.

History suggests that there is nothing abnormal or unnatural about competition between nations. And neither side’s core ideology dictates that such competitions must be resolved through violence. This is true even for the most hardened Marxist-Leninist or the most hawkish Western strategic realist. For both sides, it remains a conscious political choice – a resort when peaceful options are discarded.

replete with examples of nations sleepwalking into war.

There is, therefore, a deep interest on the part of all countries – regardless of their allegiance in this broader strategic competition – to construct a joint strategic framework to help keep the peace, or at least reduce the risk of war by accident. This is the urgent task of our time. In *The Avoidable War*, I have outlined one such framework that I call Managed Strategic Competition.

Managed Strategic Competition is relatively simple in concept, if not in its execution. First, both sides must have a clear, granular understanding of each other’s irreducible strategic red-

lines. They must conclude rationally that enhancing strategic predictability advantages both countries, that strategic deception is counterproductive, and strategic surprise is just plain dangerous. And they must build guardrails into the relationship that can absorb shocks and reduce the risk of overreach, miscommunication and misunderstanding.

This process is not easy. It will require hard, direct conversations and firm resolve. But it serves both nation’s core interest in ensuring strategic stability, and the prosperity that comes with it. Certainly, it does more to advance that outcome than the alternative of push-and-shove, as each side places their bets on how far they

can go without generating a large-scale reaction from the other.

Managed Strategic Competition also does not depend on any level of strategic trust (although trust may be rebuilt over time) but rather on clear redlines that are internally known, and diplomatically communicated, so that each side knows that, if these lines are crossed, there will be consequences. That is surely better than the febrile, uncontrolled experiment we have seen develop over recent years.

Second, both sides would be licensed to deploy whatever tools of non-lethal strategic competition across much of the rest of their overall relationship. Let the

avoid intentional conflict is strategic deterrence).

If China wants to reshape the international system in its own image through the power of its example to the world, let them try. Beijing may well believe it can convince the citizens of the globe of the superiority of Marxist-Leninist authoritarianism, as opposed to the liberal democratic image of the United States and its ideological allies. As a former prime minister of Australia, I have strong views on their likelihood of success. But I welcome the competition, because this managed strategic competition would be non-lethal in nature. Managed Strategic Competition can reduce

on common problems like transnational arms control and nuclear proliferation. In places like the Korean Peninsula, both countries have a strong national interest in ensuring strategic stability. Without some form of managed competition, the space for this kind of collaboration will continue to shrink.

Finally, for this compartmentalization of the relationship to have any prospect for success, it would need to be carefully and continuously managed by a dedicated matching of cabinet-level senior officials on both sides – steady hands committed to maintaining a baseline of stability, whatever other domestic or international political challenges arise.

Such political challenges are already many and varied. Some hardheads on both sides insist that their country should not agree to play any game unless the rules are skewed in their favor. Yet this is precisely the point; no joint framework can succeed unless both sides believe it is a genuine and fair competition in which they are capable of flourishing. Others cry “appeasement,” but this is false; the bedrock of this framework is pragmatic, realistic deterrence that keeps both sides in check.

The next few years will be pivotal to determining whether we can sidestep the path to superpower conflict. When I first put forward Managed Strategic Competition before the pandemic, it was intended as a starting point to inform an evolving discussion. As that conversation has continued, various elements akin to Managed Strategic Competition have been adopted into the foreign policy conversations of both sides (although I claim no particular credit or influence in that). On both sides, it seems the conclusion that a managed competition – as opposed to the alternative – has taken root. This work must continue. ■

THE MAJOR PROBLEM WE FACE IN THESE TIMES IS THE FORM OF STRATEGIC COMPETITION THAT IS UNFOLDING BETWEEN CHINA AND THE US – WHAT I DESCRIBE AS AN “UNMANAGED STRATEGIC COMPETITION”

In my analysis, the major problem we face in these times is the form of strategic competition that is unfolding between China and the US – what I describe as an “unmanaged strategic competition.” There are no rules, no guardrails. The daily rhythm is one where each side pushes and shoves, trying to put their country in a position of advantage relative to where they began. In the absence of some mutually agreed restraints, this type of superpower competition runs the risk of degenerating into violence. Just muddling through in the view that serious incidents won’t arise (or, if they do, the players will always de-escalate before it’s too late) is not a smart option. The stakes are simply too high, and history is

lines. They must conclude rationally that enhancing strategic predictability advantages both countries, that strategic deception is counterproductive, and strategic surprise is just plain dangerous. And they must build guardrails into the relationship that can absorb shocks and reduce the risk of overreach, miscommunication and misunderstanding.

This process is not easy. It will require hard, direct conversations and firm resolve. But it serves both nation’s core interest in ensuring strategic stability, and the prosperity that comes with it. Certainly, it does more to advance that outcome than the alternative of push-and-shove, as each side places their bets on how far they

United States and China channel their strategic rivalry into a competitive race to enhance their economic and technological prowess, their foreign policy influence, and even their military capabilities (since, over the longer term, the mechanism that will most likely

the risk of armed conflict, rather than luring either side to roll the dice on dangerous wars with unpredictable results.

Third, this framework could create the political and diplomatic space needed for strategic cooperation between the United States and China where they have aligned national interests, including on pressing global challenges. These include climate change, nuclear non-proliferation, global financial stability, researching treatments for common scourges like cancer and laying the groundwork to better manage (or even prevent) the next pandemic. After all, even at the height of the Cold War, the United States and Soviet Union were able to carve out space for collaboration

KEVIN RUDD

is a former prime minister of Australia and is set to become the Australian ambassador to the US in March. He is the author of several books, most recently *The Avoidable War: The Dangers of a Catastrophic Conflict between the US and Xi Jinping's China* published in 2022.

BY JAVIER SOLANA

Almost a year has passed since Russia invaded Ukraine. As leaders convene at this year's Munich Security Conference, it is a good moment to reflect on what we have achieved and learned as Europeans in response to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, and what challenges lie ahead for the security of our continent.

In February of last year, days before the Russian invasion of Ukraine, world leaders – excluding the Russian delegation – convened at the Munich Security Conference. The tension was evident, as the possibility of a Russian attack on Ukraine could not be ignored. However, there was some hope that the irrationality and costs of starting a war on European soil – in the context of global economic interdependence and a global economy recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic – would ultimately dissuade Russian President Vladimir Putin from launching an invasion on a former Soviet republic. This proved to be a false hope, as a few days later Russian troops were attacking Ukraine.

Shortly after the invasion of Ukraine, Putin's failure became evident. One fact about the first months of the conflict was as shocking as it was revealing of the extent of the Russian military campaign's failure. By April, four Russian generals were confirmed killed on the battlefield, while the Ukrainian government claimed the figure was seven. In any case, the Russian army – or its Soviet equivalent – had not seen such a gruesome total since World War II.

Russia's military failings in Ukraine reveal a larger historical failure. Since Boris Yeltsin appointed Putin as his successor to the Russian presidency at the turn of the millennium, Russia's development as a country has been far from exemplary. The country can in no way be referred to as

modern – in political, economic and military terms. Nonetheless, geographical realities cannot be changed, and for Europeans, Russia will remain a neighbor to contend with.

Putin did not anticipate such a strong allied response. Throughout the past year, the trans-Atlantic relationship has seen crucial displays of unity, such as the NATO Madrid Summit in June 2022. Likewise, as Putin's imperial ambitions for Russia become clearer – which reveal a nostalgic attempt to recover the perceived lost grandeur of the Soviet Union – 44 European countries took an important step in the first meeting of the European Political Community in Prague.

The response of the European Union deserves a special mention, as it has demonstrated great resilience and resolve over the past year. This period of European history is marked by paradox. Despite a succession of severe convulsions, European integration has recently undergone a historic acceleration. Since the Covid-19 virus arrived in Europe in early 2020, many of the decisions the EU has made – in the areas of health, energy, defense, among others – have facilitated greater political integration among its member states. This is not a novel dynamic in the history of the European project, which has been built and strengthened precisely as a result of the response to the crises it has faced.

A lot has been achieved in European defense policy over the past year, and a lot remains to be done. The war in Ukraine has prompted EU member states to announce

General failure

European security a year into the Russian invasion of Ukraine



Touching: French President Emmanuel Macron, then Italian Prime Minister Mario Draghi and German Chancellor Olaf Scholz drove to Kyiv to meet with Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelensky in June 2022.

unprecedented increases in defense spending totaling around €200 billion over the next four years. But whereas increased spending in defense marks a necessary first step, how that money is spent is at least as important as its scope. The main task for European governments will be to spend their resources in defense "Europeanly," so to speak. European capitals must ensure that their defense-spending policies are aligned with European strategic priorities.

Despite European resolve in countering Putin's invasion, Europeans must bear in mind that condemnation of the invasion of Ukraine is far from a universal phenomenon. A large segment of the world's population – including the group of countries we know today as the Global South – does not understand the conflict in Ukraine in existential terms. For most of the world, the conflict

in Ukraine represents, first and foremost, a material threat, which translates into increased food insecurity and rising energy prices.

The votes of the UN General Assembly reveal the reluctance of many countries to take a position on the situation in Ukraine. Although a large majority of countries condemn the Russian invasion of Ukraine, if we add together

the populations of the countries that voted against this resolution in the UN General Assembly or abstained from voting altogether, we arrive at a figure equivalent to half the world's population. While the vast populations of China and India make up a large part of that sum, the fact still deserves consideration.

Perhaps the greatest lesson of the Russian invasion of Ukraine is that interdependence is not the solution to all the world's ills, nor is it a guarantee of peace. Moscow's decision to invade Ukraine has shown that economic interdependence, despite its ability to limit the irrational excesses of some states, does not breed responsible geopolitical actors.

Europeans have discovered that interdependence, or rather dependencies, can make us more vulnerable than we thought. Accordingly, European governments are confronting this new reality with deter-

mination. In the field of energy, the steps taken to transition away from European dependence on Russian fossil fuels are nothing short of remarkable. In 2021, the EU imported more than 40 percent of its natural gas consumption needs from Russia; that figure was around 13 percent in November of 2022.

Whereas reducing risky dependencies in strategic sectors such as energy and defense is a necessary part of increasing European security for the times ahead, to ignore the value that interdependence has had – and may still have in future – in international stability would be dishonest and unproductive. The opposite of interdependence – autarky and protectionism – is not only antithetical to European security, it is incompatible with global governance.

Reducing dependence in strategic sectors must not lead to a fragmentation or decoupling of the global economy. In such a scenario, the multilateral institutions on which global governance was founded would become obsolete, making the resolution of global problems and the provision of global public goods – on which the security of humanity depends – an impossible task.

As much as Europe has been able to respond to the challenges posed by the Russian invasion of Ukraine, many other challenges lie ahead. The past few weeks, as allies debated the sending of Leopard 2 tanks, have shown that Europeans are ready to continue supporting the Ukrainian armed forces. Europeans must do more to help Ukraine defend itself, but the crucial test will involve maintaining a united response to Russia.

After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Ukraine played a crucial role in efforts to build security and stability in Europe. Once again, European security will be determined by Ukraine's fate as a nation. Ukrainians deserve to live in a free and independent country – and as Europeans, we have a historical responsibility to make that happen. ■

JAVIER SOLANA served as the Secretary-General of NATO (1995–1999), was appointed the European Union's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy, Secretary-General of the Council of the European Union and Secretary-General of the Western European Union from 1999 until December 2009. He is a member of the MSC Advisory Council.

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With or without you

The world is at a turning point. Or so they say

BY IAN BREMMER

A growing chorus of analysts, investors and policymakers claim that much like World War I and the 1918 influenza pandemic brought an end to the first great era of globalization, the combination of Russia's war in Ukraine, Covid-19, simmering populism and geopolitical competition between the United States and China – or, as historian Adam Tooze calls it, the “poly-crisis” – is kicking the current era of globalization into reverse. So-called “deglobalization” has been a theme of many recent op-eds,

A more inward-looking US no longer has the political will to serve as architect and guarantor of the world economy. China, meanwhile, is beset with structural economic challenges that limit its ability to promote its own order. And no other country or group of countries has the capacity to fill the void.

That does not mean that globalization is ending. Such an outcome would require the US to actively turn against economic integration. Bombast aside, that did not happen under Trump, and it is not happening under US President Joe Biden. Rather, the US has simply stopped leading

biggest contributor to the slowing worldwide trade-to-GDP ratio. As the country has grown richer and its economy more complex – owing to market reforms and integration into global markets – China's growth model has shifted away from exports and toward domestic consumption and investment. At the same time, domestic demand has shifted away from goods and toward services, which are traditionally less tradable. China has also moved up the value chain, manufacturing fewer cheap consumer goods and more advanced intermediate inputs, and now produces a greater share of the value of its exports domestically.

especially true of trade in digital services. For instance, computer and communication services now make up around half of all services exports and three percent of global GDP. Intangibles such as research and development, intellectual property rights, branding, design, and software have also grown significantly as a share of total trade, investment, and output. Yet many services and intangibles are not captured by current trade data.

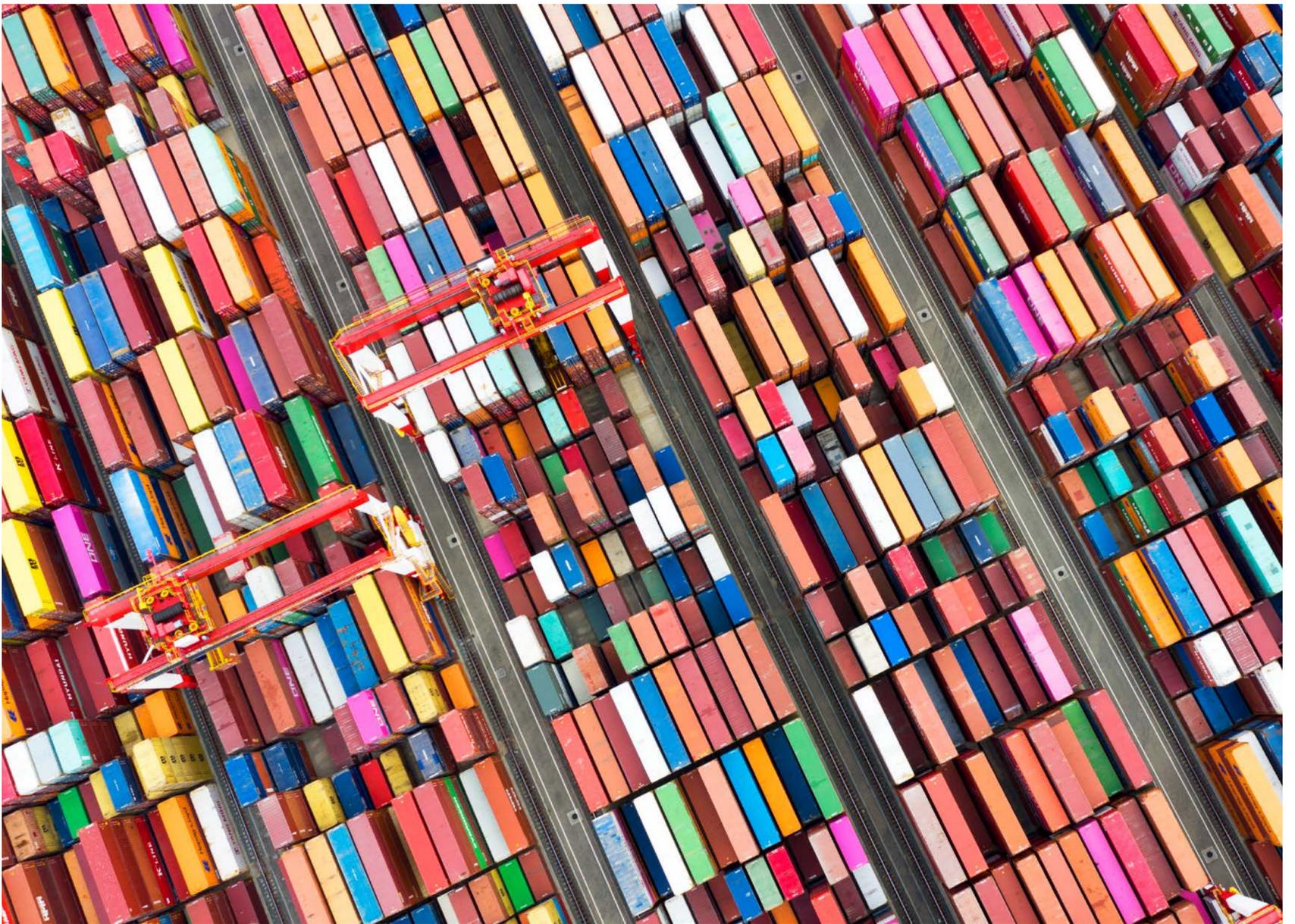
All this suggests that traditional measures of globalization are being rendered obsolete. In reality, the world is more interconnected than ever. And intercon-

The US and China, meanwhile, are locked in an intensifying geopolitical competition that has led them to decouple in areas perceived to be of national security importance. These areas encompass an ever-growing number of “strategic” sectors – most notably semiconductors but also other dual-use technologies such as renewable energy and social media platforms – that are now off-limits for foreign trade and investment.

Yet this decoupling can only go so far because the US and Chinese economies are so interdependent that a full divorce would be ruinous for both countries and for

diversifying supply sources and stockpiling. It is even possible that cross-border economic activity will splinter into geopolitical spheres of influence, as countries deepen their integration with friends and reduce their reliance on foes.

These trends point away from the aggressive globalization of recent decades, but not toward autarky. Globalization is too hard to kill: the inertia is too strong, the benefits of scale and specialization too great and the costs of reversing globalization too high. The global value chains that produce most modern goods are so complex and spread out that rec-



Contain your enthusiasm: Yangshan deep water port terminal, Shanghai, China.

PICTURE ALLIANCE / FINN / COSTFOTO

academic debates, shareholder letters and high-level conferences.

Yet globalization has been pronounced dead many times before: after the global financial crisis in 2008, after the Brexit referendum in 2016 and the election of Donald Trump later that year, and after the outbreak of the Covid-19 pandemic in 2020. Clearly, the trajectory of globalization is wildly overdetermined. That none of these predictions have come to pass should give people pause about predicting deglobalization once more.

In fairness, those proclaiming the demise of globalization as we once knew it are not totally wrong. It is true that the era of “hyperglobalization” that lasted from the 1970s to the 2008 global financial crisis, during which a hegemonic US drove a top-down process of trade liberalization and global integration, is now dead and buried along with globalism, the ideology that propelled it, and unipolarity, the international order that upheld it.

But rather than the end of economic integration, the world is experiencing a geopolitical recession that has left globalization drifting, bereft of drivers and champions, of rule makers and enforcers.

the drive for ever-greater globalization. This leadership vacuum that characterizes the geopolitical recession has resulted in the fraying of the “governance of globalization,” as the former World Bank President Robert Zoellick has put it. But globalization itself is not fraying – it is simply adrift.

A look at economic data belies the notion that globalization is reversing. Even as global capital flows relative to GDP have moderated since their peak in the middle of the first decade of this century, cross-border investment has continued to grow. Worldwide merchandise trade is near all-time highs, having already surpassed pre-pandemic projections. Multilateral trade negotiations have stalled, but the number of regional trade agreements in force has grown continuously since the 1990s, more than doubling since 2008.

Trade in goods has slowed relative to global output since 2008, but this shift does not signal deglobalization. On the contrary, the plateauing of the global trade ratio is partly a side effect of economic development – a sign of globalization's success. Take the example of China, which has seen its ratio of trade to GDP decline and nearly 30 percent since 2006 and which, by virtue of its size, has been the

None of these trends constitutes disintegration or retrenchment. Rather, they reflect the fact that globalization has diminishing returns, and not just for China. Now that most countries are already relatively well integrated into the global economy, the world as a whole has less to gain from additional globalization. This shows up in the data as a decline in global trade intensity, but it is a sign of progress, not of deglobalization.

What is more, technological advances such as e-commerce, automation, artificial intelligence, robotics, cloud computing and telework have transformed many labor-intensive production processes into capital- and knowledge-intensive processes. Trade designed to take advantage of labor-cost differentials between countries has consequently declined worldwide – but not because of any conscious turn against globalization.

The growing importance of services and intangibles in the modern economy has also fueled the false impression of deglobalization. Trade in services and intangibles has been accelerating for 15 years and accounts for an increasingly large share of global economic activity. This is

nection begets interconnection, because the more interconnected nations grow, the harder and costlier it becomes for them to decouple.

To be sure, parts of the world are decoupling, but only some parts and only to some extent.

Advanced industrial democracies are forcibly decoupling from Russia in a way that is near total and likely permanent. This decoupling will have dire implications for Russia's economic, military and geopolitical standing.

But Russia is hardly being cut off from the entire world. China and India have already increased their purchases of Russian oil from a combined 1.7 million barrels per day in June 2021 to nearly 3 million barrels per day in December 2022, and at a discount. Developing countries still rely on Russian grain and fertilizer, and many regular and irregular armies continue to use Russian weapons and mercenaries. Much of the world will continue to do business with Russia.

the world. The US is still China's largest goods trading partner and export market, and China is still the largest goods trading partner of the US, its largest supplier of imported goods, and its third-largest export market. The US and Chinese business communities want to do more, not less, business with each other. Likewise, most other countries – including the closest US allies in Asia and Europe, which are just as wary of China's rise – have no interest in mutually (and globally) assured economic destruction and are ramping up investment in and exposure to both the US and Chinese economies.

But even though the partial decoupling of Russia and the West and China and the US does not amount to deglobalization, it does indicate a shift in the nature of globalization. The global economic order is becoming more multipolar and fragmented in the absence of international leadership. Whether we like it or not, geopolitics will increasingly creep into economic calculations. Countries and companies will attempt to make themselves more resilient to external shocks and insulate themselves from geoeconomic pressures through a combination of “ally shoring,” “nearshoring,”

reating them at a national level is virtually impossible. Western companies will increasingly pull back from China, no doubt, but for the most part they won't bring production back home, instead shifting it to friendly, lower-wage nations such as Mexico and Vietnam. With few exceptions, reshoring and insourcing would prove excessively costly – and risky. As the shortage of baby formula in the US demonstrated last year, resilience is best achieved through diversification and spare capacity – not self-reliance.

The shifts in the pattern of global integration may well result in efficiency losses. Politics and geopolitics, after all, increase transaction costs and impede the optimal allocation of resources. Global integration will no doubt be less coordinated, deliberate and efficient than before. But it will still be in most countries' interest given how much worse the alternatives are.

Globalization may be getting a makeover, but it isn't going anywhere.

This article is adapted from “Globalization Isn't Dead: The World Is More Fragmented, but Interdependence Still Rules,” originally published in *Foreign Affairs*, with additional modifications made by the author.

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Dishonor roll

A new index tracks accountability in the Age of Impunity

BY DAVID MILIBAND

The evidence from around the world is that the powerful are becoming more powerful, and less accountable. As Moises Naim says at the beginning of his brilliant book *The Revenge of Power*: “What is this new foe that threatens our freedom, our prosperity, even our survival as democratic societies? The answer is *power, in a malignant new form.*”

The central challenge in international relations today is the growth of impunity. The war in Ukraine symbolizes this: Both the invasion itself and the conduct of the war by the invading force has breached all laws and norms of war. But it is not only in Ukraine that impunity is on the march. In every conflict zone, we see the exercise of power without accountability, and too often without any recognition of the legal rights of civilians caught up in the conflict (civilians now represent 84 percent of all those killed in conflict).

I call this the Age of Impunity. But Impunity is not confined to the battlefield. It is evident across a much wider terrain, where gross inequalities of power erode the checks and balances that are essential to prevent the growth of impunity. Every political leader suborning the judiciary or breaching constitutional term limits is guilty of acting with impunity. Every business exploiting its market position to abuse

consumers, ditto. Every time the rights of women are abused, there is impunity.

Impunity is the exercise of power without accountability, which in extreme form becomes the commission of crimes without punishment. This analytical frame lies behind the publication at this year’s MSC of the world’s first Atlas of Impunity. (Full disclosure: I co-chair the Advisory Board of the Atlas of Impunity in a personal capacity.)

A team of global and independent experts, with analytical support from the Eurasia Group and the Chicago Council on Global Affairs, is launching an index that scores all 197 countries and territories across five different systems experiencing impunity using 67 independent, credible and comparable indicators drawn from 29 validated sources. These areas are abuse of human rights, unaccountable governance, conflict and violence, economic exploitation and environmental degradation.

It is very important to emphasize that the Atlas is based on data that is objective not subjective. More than a dozen data sources are used for each country for each of the five areas of impunity. There is room to argue about which data sets should or should not be included; but the data does not lie or even shade.

The Atlas of Impunity reveals that while the fight for democracy is real, the framing of democracy versus autocracy does not capture the full picture

of global dynamics. The Atlas’s analytical framing of impunity versus accountability is nuanced and comprehensive enough to capture the realities of the multidimensional and interconnected nature of global challenges. While accountability is essential to democracy, democracy is not sufficient to ensure accountability. The Atlas reveals numerous examples of democratic nations that are not accountable for their actions in certain dimensions – for example Canada, which it ranks high overall, performs poorly when it comes to protecting the environment. In other cases, democratic nations perform worse than those that are not full democracies – for instance, Singapore demonstrates less impunity than the US.

In capturing the realities of 2023, the Atlas also underscores the lasting effect of history. We see that conflict is not only one of the biggest drivers of inequality, but also impunity. The vast majority of countries with the highest levels of impunity have been riddled with conflict over the last ten or more years. Afghanistan, Myanmar, Syria and Yemen are at the top of this list.

Just as significantly, the legacies of colonialism and the slave trade are correlated with higher impunity scores. Nearly all the 20 countries with the highest levels of impunity according to the Atlas are former colonies or countries affected by colonialism. Similarly, about one-third of the

30 worst-ranked countries were affected by the slave trade. But some countries that have suffered from the historical legacy of slavery and colonization, such as Ghana and Senegal, score well on the Atlas. This indicates that impunity scores are informed by circumstance but dictated by policy choices. In fact, on the abuse of human rights dimension, Senegal ranks better than the US.

The Atlas shows that the most powerful countries in the international system, including China, Russia and the US, all perform worse than their economic and geographic peers, giving a quantitative measure to the old adage that power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. The US is closer to the median than top performers, reflecting a weaker performance on conflict and violence and human rights indicators.

Environmental degradation is where impunity continues to thrive, even among otherwise accountable societies. Canada, which is one of the best-performing countries on the Atlas and traditionally scores well on similar indices, is only moderately better than the mean in terms of environmental degradation.

DAVID MILIBAND is a former UK foreign secretary and currently serves as president of the International Rescue Committee.

India, China, Russia and the US – all among the largest greenhouse gas emitters globally – rank 20th, 70th, 78th and 101st, respectively. Norway, New Zealand, Singapore and Israel are all countries whose environmental rankings are notably worse than their overall rankings.

The opposite of impunity is accountability. So the central challenge for those of us concerned about the growth of impunity is to foster the “countervailing power” of accountability. The notion of countervailing power comes from JK Galbraith’s 1952 book *American Capitalism*, which focuses on the way government intervention, including through the strengthening of market mechanisms, could tackle the dangers posed by the corporate behemoths of the era.

Today we need to build countervailing power in each of the five areas highlighted by the Atlas of Impunity. This is not just a job for government – it needs the private and NGO sectors as well. We have examples of what can be effective.

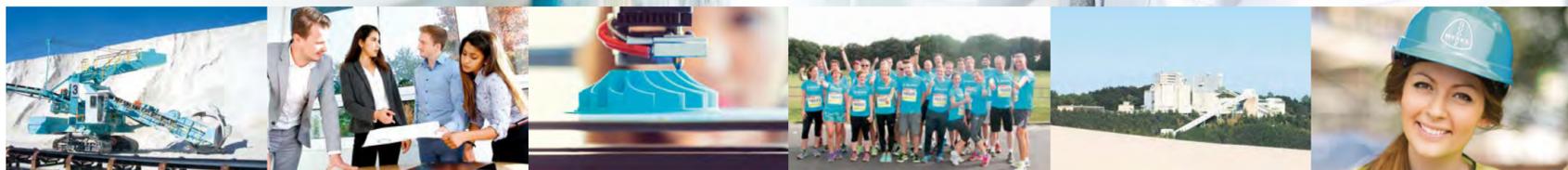
First, accountability starts with transparency – shining a light on impunity and the actors responsible for it. The investigative journalism of organizations like Bellingcat and the Ukrainian-led 5 AM Coalition has made clear the scale of war crimes committed in the war in Ukraine. Similar efforts are made on good governance by groups like ProPublica and on economic corruption by Transparency International.

Second, accountability needs legal backing. This speaks to the importance of an independent judiciary to prevent impunity within a system of government, but also needs to apply when holding individuals to account for impunity across borders. The application of universal jurisdiction by German courts has made some progress in bringing court cases against perpetrators of war crimes in Syria. It is appropriate and encouraging that this year’s MSC is debating the right accountability mechanisms for impunity in the Russian invasion of Ukraine.

Third, acts of accountability depend on systems and cultures of accountability, just as acts of impunity thrive in systems and cultures of impunity. Building up systems of accountability that can in turn shift organizational, bureaucratic and political cultures is key. Two such examples are the US Department of Defense’s recently launched Civilian Harm Mitigation and Response Action Plan, which establishes stronger formal pathways for accountability when the US military harms civilians in conflict, and Nigeria’s National Human Rights Commission to investigate allegations of abuse by the military.

The Cold War was fought to uphold the principle that power should be accountable not immutable. Today the fight is more multidimensional, more complex, but no less important.

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At a Scholz pace

After a year of lumbering through Europe's worst security crisis since 1945, the German chancellor's foreign and defense policy still lacks speed, direction and determination

Thinking about it: German Chancellor Olaf Scholz

PICTURE ALLIANCE / ASSOCIATED PRESS | MICHAEL SOHN

BY HENNING HOFF

Germany does the most!" This is the definition of "Scholzing" that German Chancellor Olaf Scholz would prefer become the broadly accepted one. It is rather at odds with the definition provided by the person who made the term popular in the first place, Oxford historian Timothy Garton Ash. A few days before Scholz announced Germany's long-delayed decision to send Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine, Garton Ash, writing on Twitter, suggested this entry into the world's political lexicon: "scholzing, verb, communicating good intentions only to use/find/invent any reason to delay these and/or prevent them from happening." There is some truth to both Scholz's and Garton Ash's interpretations. What is problematic for Scholz, and for his foreign and security policy at large, is that the latter overshadows and impairs the former.

Under Scholz' leadership, Germany has achieved some remarkable feats. Within his first year in office, his chancellery, in tandem with the Ministry for Economic Affairs and Climate Action led by Green Party Vice Chancellor Robert Habeck, has weaned Europe's biggest economy off Russian energy supplies, reducing Russian President Vladimir Putin's capacity for economic blackmail to zero. Contrary to gloomy reports predicting the deindustrialization of Germany, the country's economy actually grew in 2022 and is likely to do so again in 2023. This is good news not only for Berlin, but also for Brussels and the rest of the continent.

It is also true that Germany, if not doing "the most" – that continues to be the job of the United States under Joe Biden, one of the most, but probably also last, trans-Atlanticist US presidents – does quite a lot. It is now housing over a million Ukrainian refugees, providing humanitarian aid, supporting Ukraine financially and delivering a vast array of military hardware which, given the desolate state of Germany's armed forces, is trickier than the outside world would often think.

The decision announced on Jan. 25 to finally give way and send Leopard 2 tanks to Ukraine – which the chancellery deemed to contain so much potential for an escalation in violence that US cover in the form of a commit-

ment to send M1 Abrams was needed – will place Germany even more solidly at the center of European efforts to enable Ukraine to continue its fight for sovereignty and territorial integrity. Even those more to the left of Scholz' Social Democratic Party (SPD) now include Crimea, illegally annexed by Putin in 2014, in the mix.

The anxiety over possibly "going too far" with Putin and thus risking a possible nuclear escalation, which would lead to "World War III" and the obliteration of Germany, is basically the argument one hears from chancellery officials to explain why such – indeed serious – decisions are taking Scholz so long to make. They cite various Scholzian utterances during 2022 to explain his "North German by nature" – that is, cool and reserved – style: his oath of office first and foremost refers to Germany (i.e., not to Ukraine, not to Europe); he is no "Kaiser Wilhelm" (i.e., allowing Europe to slide into military catastrophe); and he will not be "driven" or "rushed" by anything or anyone.

Scholz' self-assessment and resolute *modus operandi* appear to be deeply ingrained and are setting the chancellor up – if not for failure, then at least for significantly diminishing his potential for leadership on the European and international stage.

This is all the more regrettable since Scholz' coalition partners, the Greens and the pro-business Free Democrats (FDP), have pushed the chancellor – behind the scenes yet increasingly openly – to act more swiftly and with greater clarity. It's an open secret that Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock had been arguing in favor of helping Ukraine with tank deliveries since the summer; FDP chair of the Bundestag defense committee, Marie-Agnes Strack-Zimmermann, even spoke of a "German failure."

Contrary to reports of the chancellor actually presiding over a four-way coalition – with the left wing of the SPD suppos-

edly building its own, obstructive block – Scholz has his own party largely behind him. Some Social Democrats even appreciate the chancellor's ability to slowly reduce his opponents to the status of "warmongers" for advocating that Germany send ever-more sophisticated weapons to Ukraine. And while the SPD has now committed itself to a European security order that no longer works with Russia, but rather against it, the long-winded decision-making processes Scholz oversees fuel suspicions that some in the chancellery and the SPD still haven't given up on returning to some kind of *modus vivendi* with Russia – an impossible scenario in the foreseeable future, not only because of the nature of Putin and his criminal regime, but also because it would deepen beyond repair the existing rift with Germany's eastern and northern neighbors.

As Constanze Stelzenmüller of the Brookings Institution has rightly pointed out, Scholz is a "wartime chancellor whether he likes it or not." This requires

greater strategic foresight and a wider calculus of where Germany's interests lie. That the provision of Western-made armored fighting vehicles as well as main battle tanks (and sooner or later fighter jets as well) would be needed to help Ukraine within a year of Russia's invasion was clear early on – along with the need for greater amounts of ammunition. However, no preparations or contingencies were made in spring or summer; thus, when decisions were finally taken – at Scholz' insistence – "in strategic lockstep" with the United States, Germany's leadership and armed forces had to scramble each and every time.

Having put ill-fated and ill-suited Christine Lambrecht in charge of the defense ministry has meant a lost year in the Herculean task of turning Germany around militarily. Her successor, Boris Pistorius, has shown the skill, deftness and can-do attitude that is now urgently required at the top

of Germany's Bundeswehr, and he may be able to make up for lost time more quickly than seems presently possible. For now, however, Scholz' ambition, declared in the pages of *Foreign Affairs*, of making Germany the "guarantor of European security" is likely, at best, to prompt smirks of disbelief across Europe, especially in the eastern reaches of the continent. Meanwhile, Scholz' insistence on getting President Biden to commit to sending battle tanks as well has further ingrained the impression of a Berlin that will not move without handholding by Washington.

However, earlier decisions and initiatives have already led to allies scratching their heads: Which shape or form will Germany's military *Zeitenwende* take? Scholz has used every opportunity – most recently with French President Emmanuel Macron in celebrating the 60th anniversary of the Elysée Treaty – to stress his ambition to invest in Europe's defense industry. Yet his attempts to make the Bundeswehr fit for deployment have taken a decidedly trans-Atlantic turn, from purchasing

providing the nucleus and headquarters of a 5,000 strong European Intervention Force under EU command already looks like an anachronism, as the greatest threat by far to European security has proven to be an aggressive Russia invading a sovereign Eastern European country while saber-rattling atop its nuclear arsenal. Given how closely the EU and NATO are now aligned, such an effort looks like an extravagance. Rather, strengthening NATO's European pillar – in close cooperation with France and, hopefully, the UK – should become the main focus of Germany's defense policy.

With his Leopard decision under US cover, Scholz has more-or-less abandoned European autonomy or sovereignty in the military sphere for a long time to come – yet he seems determined to pursue a completely different tack when it comes to economics. In this realm, the chancellor and his advisors are unmistakably clear that the future is multipolar. In his speech alongside Macron marking 60 years of Franco-German

friendship at Sorbonne University, Scholz vowed to "make the European economic and social model fit for the future, without, it must be said, being taken in by those who preach the gospel of deglobalization and decoupling." To whom could the chancellor possibly be referring? Certainly not the Chinese. While China has only ever very selectively "coupled" with the global economy and has already put that process in reverse, Beijing is not "preaching decoupling" when it addresses European audiences. Indeed, in a charm offensive launched after the 20th Chinese Communist Party Congress, Chinese leaders are explicitly trying to widen the trans-Atlantic gap.

Scholz may have made very clear to Xi Jinping, on his ill-advised visit to Beijing last year, that a Chinese military move against Taiwan would end Sino-European economic relations in the same way Putin's aggression against Ukraine has ended similar Russo-European ties. But assuming Xi would stop short of such a step, Scholz seems to expect to be able to maneuver a Germany that is unencumbered by wider strategic considerations. He seems to prefer to carry on pretending that China doesn't see the West (including Germany) as the adversary. Nonetheless, the US-China rivalry – caused in part by Beijing trying to upend the rules-based order and substituting it with one operating on Chinese rules – requires Germany to adopt a more determined China policy. Scholz has stressed that he wants to "reduce one-sided dependencies," but from the chancellor's point of view, the only thing required of Germany, while anchored in the EU "pole," is to carry out business with no regard to geopolitics, geoeconomics or the price of security.

Herein lies a basic contradiction that Scholz will need to solve during the coming three years: Germany relies on US cover to make decisions supporting Ukraine militarily, yet it is perfectly within Scholz' power to "avoid a new Cold War." This not only speaks of hubris, it also underestimates the challenge posed by China. With the Netherlands and Japan already aligning with the US on restricting Chinese access to the most advanced semiconductors, Germany risks falling more and more behind the curve.

This is not to say that Berlin's recent push to reach out to Latin America, the Indo-Pacific and Africa – taking the measure of the other "power centers" – is misguided. On the contrary, Scholz is right to have Germany's foreign policy focus more on the Global South, but he will need to enable his foreign ministry to put greater resources into this effort. Trying to isolate the determinants of Germany's security from its economic policy has gone badly wrong with Russia. Scholz needs to ensure it does not happen again with China. Accelerating Germany's ascent to the status of functioning global military player, increasing the strategic clarity of where exactly the future of the country and continent lies and pursuing pan-European objectives with greater determination – these and other accomplishments would go a long way to ensuring that future dictionary readers agree on what "Scholzing" really means, namely "doing the best for Germany and Europe." ■

WITH HIS LEOPARD DECISION UNDER U.S. COVER, SCHOLZ HAS MORE-OR-LESS ABANDONED EUROPEAN AUTONOMY OR SOVEREIGNTY IN THE MILITARY SPHERE FOR A LONG TIME TO COME

HENNING HOFF is executive editor of *Internationale Politik Quarterly*, the English edition of *Internationale Politik*, published by the German Council on Foreign Relations (DGAP).



Liberté, égalité, vindication

Brothers in arms: French President Emmanuel Macron and Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy in Paris, Feb. 9, 2023.

PICTURE ALLIANCE / ASSOCIATED PRESS | MOHAMMED BADRA

French perspectives on Russia's war in Ukraine

BY FLORENCE GAUB

The first weekend after Russia's invasion of Ukraine was a turbulent one in Europe. Some 100,000 demonstrators gathered in Berlin, 80,000 in Prague; German Chancellor Olaf Scholz spoke of a *Zeitenwende*, a historical watershed; a truck carrying altar bread rammed into the Russian embassy in Dublin. A long-held world view was shattered.

All over Europe? Well, not all over Europe. In France, the national reaction defied all Gallic stereotypes. In Paris, only a few thousand turned up at the Place de la République to demonstrate against the war, a crowd size somewhat at odds with the national inclination to take to the streets. While Germans began stockpiling iodine for fear of a nuclear war, just 30 percent of French people said they felt "very worried" about Russia actually using its nuclear weapons. Not only is French military support to Ukraine comparatively low (it ranks tenth as opposed to Germany's third), its public debate sees no major issue with this, quite in contrast with Germany's torturous, self-accusatory conversation about how much is enough. In this light, the fact that French President Emmanuel Macron continued to speak to Russian President Vladimir Putin on the phone, and voiced doubts about Ukrainian NATO membership, was seen by some as breaking ranks with Ukraine. It almost seemed that what was historic everywhere else was not historic in France.

But reading it this way would be to thoroughly misread France and how it understands strategy, security and defense. As Macron said in his initial reaction to the invasion: France not only saw this coming, it's ready for it.

There are broadly two reasons for this. First, France can afford to be less anxious than some of its European partners because it invested early on in – you guessed it – autonomy. Often misunderstood – not to say belittled – by others, French desires for self-

sufficiency aren't just a cute Gaulist anachronism. They are part of, or rather, they *are* its strategic DNA. This is true for several reasons, but one key factor is its traumatic historical experiences, including its wars with Germany and its feeling of being strategically abandoned, especially by the United States. It is often forgotten that in the years after World War II, France's defense strategy was all about cooperation. France was one of the founding members of NATO in 1949, and it proposed even closer ties with the UK and US in a tripartite directorate in NATO, something akin to an elite nuclear club. But both declined. France also felt snubbed when it realized it didn't get the same US

"asset." And while 69 percent like NATO and 81 percent would vote for France to stay in it, only 24 percent think the Alliance will be "very important" for the future of France's security (in contrast to 47 percent of Germans). And why? It is nice to have friends, but French security doesn't depend on NATO in the eyes of the public. France also has robust defense production, ranking third in global exports behind the US and Russia. Although it has existed since the 1930s, it grew to today's levels largely under de Gaulle in the 1960s.

Of course, France's strategic autonomy doesn't end in the defense sector. When it comes to energy, France had been import-

sounds a little too independent for them. No matter which word is used, what it means is the capacity to act strategically without depending on any other country. When Macron called NATO brain-dead in 2019, it wasn't to say that the Alliance had lost its relevance, but that it had lost its essence: the desire and capacity to defend one another. Unless Europe began thinking of itself strategically as a geopolitical power, it would "no longer be in control of (its) destiny." In French thinking, security strategy isn't just about guns, it's about identity, meaning, purpose.

At the time, this ruffled more than a few feathers. Coming from a country that had left NATO's

The survival of another European country is shown to be reliant on trans-Atlantic help: the Americans are sending material worth ten times that which Europeans are sending, not to mention critical intelligence. Countries depending on Russia for energy had to scramble for solutions as Europe sailed into a bitter cold winter of massive inflation.

Perhaps most importantly, military establishments across the continent faced an uneasy question: Would we be ready to fight a war with Russia ourselves? And even more inconvenient questions lie ahead: What if US troops left Europe for Asia? Or what if Trump returns to the White House in 2024 and pulls the plug

meet its 2 percent target – quite in contrast to Germany, whose 1-billion **Zeitenwende** bonus is not enough to get it there. A substantial amount of this money will go to the modernization of France's nuclear arsenal. Once seen as a Cold War anachronism, many Europeans now feel differently about it. In fact, many are wondering whether they – or indeed Ukraine – can seek refuge under France's nuclear umbrella.

Despite the doubts Macron raised late last year with certain remarks, the official guideline is clear: The security of France's fellow EU and NATO member states is declared a national interest, even outside their respective territories; and by extension, this applies also to those under attack by nuclear weapons. This might sound vague and indirect as an answer to the nuclear question, but it's all part of the deterrence game. Leaving your adversary in the dark about your intentions is the defining feature of this game. (Just google for the exact words Putin uses in this regard and you'll get the idea.) Since 1945, French strategy has continually comprised a yearning for togetherness. Its strategic review referred to solidarity as "essential," and made being a committed and even demanding member of NATO an objective, hence dispelling the suspicions of its secret project to replace it with a European Army. While France may not need allies the way others do, it still wants them very much. But its problem in this regard isn't the US, it's its fellow Europeans who have been slow to wake up to the reality France has been warning of. Supporting and pushing for European strategic autonomy is therefore another explicit goal of the strategic review. This doesn't mean France has no homework to do, especially when it comes to Ukraine. It could send more weapons – 70 percent of French support this – or be more vocal about what it is sending. It could also make more explicit its desire to abandon its traditional position as "balancing power" when it comes to Ukraine. But one thing is for sure: it will never cease in its quest to awaken other Europeans to the future it has envisaged.

FRANCE WASN'T JUST READY FOR THIS CONFLICT, IT HAD CONSISTENTLY WARNED OF IT, OR RATHER, OF THE FACT THAT EUROPEAN SECURITY CANNOT TO BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED

support as the UK when it came to the development of a nuclear weapon. Its conclusion was clear: to avoid further trauma, France had to be in a position to take care of its own security needs. It went ahead and developed its nuclear weapon without the US, although assistance from Washington finally trickled in a decade later. Today, France is the only nuclear power in the European Union and ranks almost on par with China with its 280 warheads.

France also continued to maintain its military posture. Although its defense spending fell like all of its neighbors' in the early 2000s, it always hovered around the 2 percent of GDP agreed to by NATO allies in 2006, making it one of the few to meet this target before the war. In part, this is because its successive governments never faced the hostility that is so common across the Rhine when it comes to all things military: 86 percent of French have a positive image of their armed forces, and 81 percent think of nuclear weapons as an

dependent since the end of World War I, as it had no significant coal, oil or gas reserves. In 1970, just before the oil shock, France imported three-quarters of its energy needs. The 1973 Arab export embargo in protest against European support to Israel during the Yom Kippur War hit hard when fuel prices increased fivefold. The year after, France launched its massive program to expand nuclear energy, which has proven to be its savior ever since. When the war in Ukraine began, France was autonomous in terms of electricity production, and Russia filled just 17 percent of its gas needs (in comparison to 55 percent in Germany).

But France wasn't just ready for this conflict, it had consistently warned of it, or rather, of the fact that European security cannot to be taken for granted, and requires rethinking. In 2017, Macron famously called for European strategic autonomy, or sovereignty, as Germany and others prefer to call it, as autonomy

command structure in 1966 (only to return in 2008), had voted down the idea of a European army in 1955 and refuses to even attend the NATO nuclear planning group, this was rich. It was read as France wanting to promote its anti-trans-Atlantic agenda, to replace NATO with the European Union and to impose on others its obsession with autonomy.

But today, France stands vindicated. The Ukraine moment might be cause for hoorah as it showcases a moment of Western unity, while also glaringly exposing its vulnerabilities. Without the US, Ukraine's military would no longer exist.

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on NATO? Even in a best-case scenario, Europe's military future cannot afford the status quo.

To France, this is clear. Its new National Strategic Review isn't fundamentally different from that of 2017 – after all, France was right in its assessment – but it ups the ante. Now France is warning to prepare for high-intensity conflicts, for a US pivot to Asia, for an aggressive China and, of course, Russia. "We need to be one war ahead," Macron says, and the French military take him for his word. La Red Team, a project underway since 2019 that involves science fiction writers, is imagining all kinds of future wars to challenge how the armed forces think of future battlegrounds. Strategic foresight – still an underused or unknown tool in many European strategic circles – is part and parcel of how French defense intends to meet the future. France also puts its money where its mouth is: It has just increased its military budget by a third, and will continue to

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The Security Times

SPECIAL EDITION OF THE GERMAN TIMES FOR THE 59TH MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE

No crisis is an island

How to tackle the security threats inherent to the climate crisis, and the climate threats inherent to security crises

BY KIRA VINKE

With multiple crises requiring the attention of decision-makers, the climate crisis could soon spin out of control, with no adequate responses in sight. The security sector – from civilian crisis prevention to traditional defense – has an important role to play in addressing the double challenge of managing the security threats that arise from emerging climate impacts and safeguarding planetary security. Though its deadliness is often downplayed and its conflict potential obscured, the unfolding climate crisis is already contributing to humanitarian crises and conflict genesis in many countries across the globe.

Intensifying droughts, floods and storms can inflict great suffering, especially for those living in areas of conflict. With yields becoming less and less reliable, the weaponization of hunger is becoming an easily deployable tool for authoritarian governments looking to suppress regional opponents by stripping them of the means through which they could adapt to difficult climatic conditions. For example, the Ethiopian government has been accused of blocking food aid and access to fertilizer and seeds in Tigray during the war there. A fragile peace agreement only recently alleviated the food insecurity by enabling aid organizations to reenter the region.

Climate change can impact existing conflict constellations and can become a driver of conflict itself, by reducing the resource base in areas where people already have unequal access to income, food and fresh water. The record-breaking drought in Syria that preceded the civil war contributed to rising tensions in the country, as crop-yield losses and perishing cattle herds drove the mass migration of people from rural areas into cities where adequate housing was scarce and social services lacking. The mishandling of the agricultural crisis arguably added to the resentment against the dictatorial Assad regime, which chose to execute a bloody crackdown of the initial protests in Syria.

When longstanding farming techniques no longer provide stable subsistence, societal friction is brought on not only by economic crises. The destruction of traditional identities that are often connected to livelihoods can provide fertile ground for extremists' recruitment strategies. For instance, marginalized Fulani pastoralists in Burkina Faso, whose herds are affected by drought conditions, have been targeted by Islamist terrorists, aiming to lure young men into their organizations. Conflicts have many causes and the factors leading to violence are often intertwined. Climatic factors influencing conflict constellations should not be analyzed in isolation from socio-economic factors. But without taking into consideration the environmental

contexts in which conflicts occur, crisis prevention cannot address root causes.

Conflict resolution methods, such as environmental peacebuilding, can bring communities together and restore agricultural lands. Farmer Managed Natural Regeneration (FMNR), a reforestation technique that requires effective community-based land management, has been successfully piloted in many countries, including large projects in the Sahel. The aim of FMNR is to use agroforestry techniques to increase yields and provide additional income from tree products, like fodder. Farmers and herders protect the land to regrow trees from underground root systems. If the measures are accompanied by other improvements, such as

maintain or improve their standard of living. Especially farmers or fisherfolk displaced by climate impacts may lack skillsets that would enable them to successfully integrate into urban labor markets. Debt bondage and poverty spirals can be the consequence, as is already evident in Bangladesh, where many have been internally displaced by tropical cyclones and could not return to the homes after falling into debt in their place of arrival.

Moreover, there is a stark difference between an anticipatory move out of harm's way and fleeing abruptly from disaster. In high-risk zones options for early voluntary relocation are needed, while in many other areas preemptive adaptation measures could still prevent forced migra-

are factors that determine stability in the face of climate change. Unfortunately, recurrent physical environmental impacts can erode a state's financial capacity to build up strong systems that can withstand shocks. The climate struggle can therefore only be won through prevention, which in this case constitutes first and foremost the rapid phaseout of fossil fuels.

While current and near-term impacts could still be manageable with adequate adaptation responses, looming on the horizon are larger risks of ever-growing emissions that would surpass crisis management capacities. Industrialized states that significantly contribute to global greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide or methane,

sions. The need for reconstruction will likely require further emissions, as the building sector is CO₂-intensive.

Avoiding dangerous climate change means limiting global warming to 1.5°-2°C, to reduce extreme risks that could destabilize the climate system and threaten human civilization. This can only be achieved through a swift bending of the global emissions curve. If states continue on the path of burning large amounts of fossil fuels, then by the end of the century, large parts of the tropical belt could be rendered uninhabitable due to deadly heat conditions. Tipping points in the earth's systems could be triggered by higher warming levels that would result in irreversible changes. Within the lifetime of a person born today, the planetary conditions that allowed humans to thrive on earth could be severely disrupted. To prevent these cascading effects, emissions reductions must be rapidly implemented across the board.

This task also concerns the security sector, as militaries contribute significantly to global greenhouse gas emissions through troop movements and the operation of military bases. Military emissions make up more than 5 percent of the world's total emissions, more than Japan's or Germany's share of global greenhouse gases. Investments in technology and equipment are often long-term projects and change is rarely swift. But the transition to renewables also harbors strategic opportunities. Reducing the supply logistics for fossil fuels to be transported to field operations can be a strategic military advantage. Also at a national level, energy independence from power infrastructure like electricity grids vulnerable to physical ambush or cyberattacks can be crucial for system relevant facilities such as police, military and healthcare infrastructure. The US Department of Defense already set a target to increase its share of energy from renewable sources to one-quarter by 2025. In the long term, research and development in the area of green defense have the possibility to ignite innovation that could be adapted in the civilian sphere as well.

The stakes are high for climate action, plus increasing divisions and economic pressures hold the potential to derail existing decarbonization strategies. But a common challenge to humanity also has the potential to unlock cooperation. While progress on implementing the commitments of the landmark Paris Climate Agreement of 2015 has been slow, as more and more impacts materialize, the willingness of countries to act on climate change may increase as well – hopefully before the limits of adaptation are surpassed.

More than 30 years after the first IPCC report was published, there are no good arguments left to delay emissions mitigation in any sector. Today is the day change should commence. ■

CONFLICTS LIKE THE RUSSIAN WAR OF AGGRESSION AGAINST UKRAINE INTENSIFY THE CRISIS AS THEY NOT ONLY CAUSE DEVASTATING HUMAN LOSSES, BUT ALSO INFLICT SEVERE ENVIRONMENTAL DAMAGES THAT CAN IMPEDE HUMAN DEVELOPMENT FOR YEARS, EVEN AFTER THE VIOLENCE ENDS

clean cooking stoves or capacity-building activities, sustainable change can be induced that can also improve intra-communal relationships.

Humanitarian crises can be triggered by climate impacts, when livelihoods erode and no sufficient measures are taken to shield people from the forces of nature. In extreme cases, people are displaced from their homes temporarily or even permanently. Already in its first assessment report in 1990, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) identified the displacement of people as one of global warming's gravest effects. Migration can be both a response to impacts as well as an adaptation to looming threats and it can occur at varying geographical and temporal scales. The diversity of human mobility in the context of climate change has since been acknowledged by scientists – it also features in the 6th and latest assessment report of the IPCC.

The World Bank projects that under a pessimistic scenario more than 200 million people could be internally displaced by climate change by 2050. It is hard to imagine such a scenario without knock-on effects for transboundary migration. And while in more and more places migration is becoming the last resort to adapt to extremes, moving does not necessarily enable people to

tion that will otherwise occur under the already locked-in future warming of at least 1.5°C above pre-industrial temperature levels.

Human mobility can help cope with these changes and should not, per se, be seen as a threat to security. However, the large-scale and involuntary uprooting of people will cause great suffering, which is why safe migration pathways as well as in-situ adaptation options must be brought to scale. Support for climate adaptation is most urgently necessary in our most vulnerable countries, but when global warming is not brought to a halt, no country will be spared from severe damages. Already, at only 1.2°C warming, even people in the United States and Germany have been displaced by wildfires or flooding and public funds were directed to those suddenly in need.

As these different examples illustrate, physical climate impacts work their way through very diverse social and economic systems that possess differing abilities to respond and adapt to shifting weather patterns and extreme events. This is why when three countries are hit by a regional drought, two may remain stable, while the other descends into chaos. Disaster risk reduction infrastructure and preparedness, early warning systems, agricultural insurances, representation of minorities, good governance – all

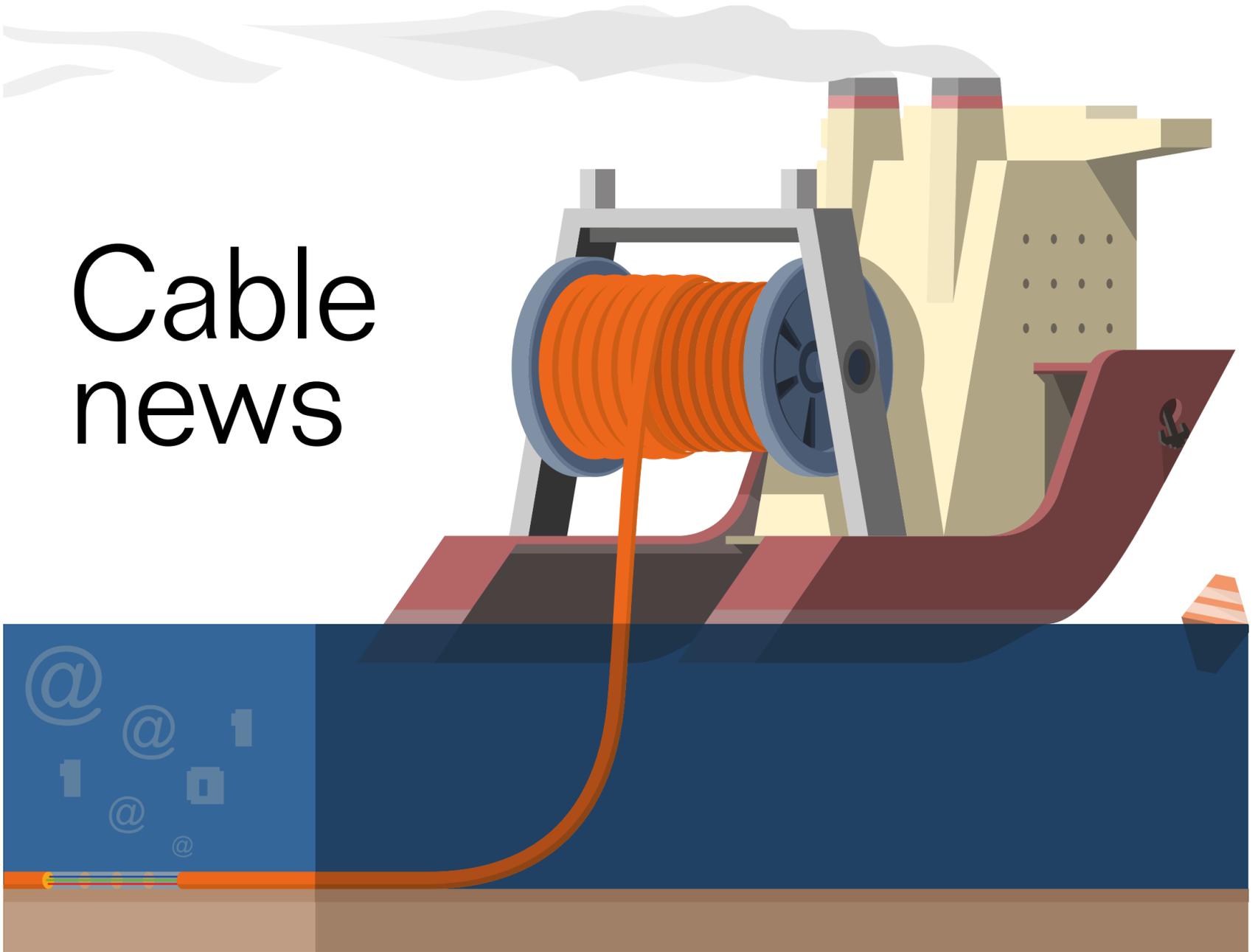
are therefore – albeit unintentionally – reinforcing instability by inducing transboundary damages.

Furthermore, conflicts like the Russian war of aggression against Ukraine intensify the crisis as they not only cause devastating human losses, but also inflict severe environmental damages that can impede human development for years, even after the violence ends. Toxic remnants of ammunition, strikes on industrial plants and the destruction of agricultural lands and forests are the most imminent local effects. But attacks on fuel reserves, troop movements and the sabotage of the Nord Stream pipelines also caused significant amounts of greenhouse gas emis-

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Cable news



Underwater infrastructure is the West's next great security risk

BY OLIVER ROLOFS

Europe is increasingly in danger of being caught between fronts. Russia and China are pursuing their confrontational power politics ever more aggressively, not only using Europe's continued demands for energy, critical raw materials and rare earths as leverage, but also attempting to gain control over data flows and communication channels.

Access to data and the ability to protect its integrity are essential to our security and prosperity. Data is arguably the most important strategic asset of our time. We tend to think that our data is held in the cloud and that everything is interconnected by space, but that is not entirely true. Indeed, our data is carried by underwater cables on the ocean floor – in some cases up to 4000 meters deep. The digital age is really a cable age.

The backbone of the global economy and the vast bulk of agency intelligence worldwide travel along the same cables that carry our emails and Netflix shows. More than 95 percent of international data traffic is based on a global network of physical, submarine cables – each not much wider than a garden hose. And then there's the new underwater energy infrastructure used to export solar power and hydrogen. Yet Europe has left itself vulnerable in doing little to protect this increasingly important undersea technology.

These vulnerabilities were drilled home last September with the explosions that occurred on the Nord Stream gas pipeline in the Baltic Sea. It is clear that the incidents were deliberate, and that there are powers with an interest, and apparently the means, to carry out targeted attacks on the backbone of our energy supply. But almost five months later, official investigators are still reluctant to point the finger at possible perpetrators. Governments appeared unfazed by the fact that Europeans have the right to know whom they should thank for the full extent of the energy crisis. The sabo-

tage at sea remains a mystery, although widespread speculation continues to blame the Russian Federation for the blasts. Despite the uncertainty, the attack has only heightened concerns about the threat to underwater infrastructure. It has also served as a reminder to us Europeans of the vulnerability of our energy supplies. What will we do if the next attack targets a large offshore wind farm or the North Sea pipeline from Norway, which is so important in the current crisis? The concerns are justified, but fear does not help in this situation. This much is clear: We must do a better job at protecting our critical infrastructure – and defend it, if necessary.

Once upon a time, it was the Europeans who drove the interconnectedness of the world forward. The first ocean cable was laid between the United Kingdom and France in 1850. The first fiberoptic cable heralded a new era in trans-Atlantic communications in 1988, as a joint project of the then partly state-owned telecommunications companies AT&T, France Télécom and British Telecom.

Today, there are only a few European providers that themselves lay cables through the oceans. One of them is the Finnish company Nokia, which has repeatedly considered selling this business. As a result, there is growing concern that Europe

ing personnel costs. However, these systems are poorly secured, exposing submarine cables to cybersecurity risks.

Unlike Russia and China, Europe has been less vigilant about who makes or installs its cables and is more dependent on cables across oceans. This makes Europe more vulnerable. The EU must expand its own capacities and lay more submarine cables, as well as replace outdated ones, to reduce its exposure to attacks and boost its independence.

Improving public tenders and the tendering principle for the construction and/or maintenance of critical infrastructure – both below and above the surface of the ocean – would help

protect our own interests. At the same time, protection concepts should already be implemented when laying submarine cables and pipelines – and landing stations should be directly integrated into this planning.

Likewise, a military response is needed: Unlike during the Cold War, NATO has few frigates designed for anti-submarine warfare, let alone submarines capable of performing maintenance on strategically important underwater cables at greater depths. China and Russia, meanwhile, have upgraded and specialized their navies for such maritime operations.

NATO and individual partners, such as France and the

global data volume will increase to a whopping 175 zettabytes – that's a 175 with 21 zeros! – by 2025. At the same time, the global demand for energy is also rising, especially due to advancing digitalization and ever-larger data centers. According to the US Energy Information Administration (EIA), global energy consumption is increasing by an average of up to 2 percent annually. Energy security is also currently the main factor driving the energy transition, as countries look to energy technologies and renewables as a solution to the quandary of how to free themselves from their dependence on Russian oil and gas. More underwater infrastructure is thus needed to transport renewable electricity and, in the future, hydrogen via pipelines.

The task of protecting this critical infrastructure has become increasingly urgent and requires a new security and resilience strategy for Europe and beyond. The high vulnerability of underwater infrastructure and its key geostrategic role is not up for debate – and has become yet another realm of contention between the great powers of the East and West. Europe cannot afford to fall asleep at the wheel. It must continue to learn to assert itself on the global stage.

The flagship projects associated with the Global Gateway Initiative are the appropriate next steps in Europe's efforts to express stronger global leadership in the future. The initiative aims to offer developing countries an alternative to the strategic largesse inherent in China's Belt and Road Initiative, by means of which Beijing demonstrates its power along strategic trade routes by developing ports, energy projects and telecommunications networks.

It is precisely the security of these data networks that looms so large in the coming years. The wars of the future will no doubt include conflicts over undersea data cables and energy transport structures. Europe must prove it can nip this crisis in the bud and future-proof itself in ways that allow it to effectively tackle long-term challenges

WE ARE FACING A PARADIGM SHIFT IN HOW THE DIGITAL SOVEREIGNTY AND STRATEGIC AUTONOMY REPEATEDLY CHAMPIONED BY BRUSSELS CAN ACTUALLY BE REALIZED

In addition to the risk of sabotage and attacks, the question of submarine cable control has become a burning issue for Europe. The growing amount of data passing through the cables encourages third countries, especially those not sympathetic to the West, to spy on or sabotage them. We are facing a paradigm shift with regard to how the digital sovereignty and strategic autonomy repeatedly championed by Brussels can actually be realized.

Trans-Atlantic data traffic doubles every two years, while the average age of European submarine cable systems is almost 20 years. At the same time, the laying and maintenance of submarine cables is becoming increasingly expensive, and a growing number of non-European players are wrangling into this vital strategic realm. This leads to the formation of sometimes confusing cable consortia with different owners and specific interests – and state actors, including those from China, are also involved.

will permanently lose its technological prowess in this field – and thereby forfeit its sovereignty.

As Russia and China continue to vie for geopolitical advantage through their attempts to control the flow of data and communications, Europe finds itself tussling on at least two fronts. The Indian Institute for Peace and Conflict Studies and the Asia Center in Leiden, Netherlands, estimate that China's share of global submarine cables will reach 20 percent between 2025 and 2030. Another challenge for European policymakers and local companies is to stand up to the growing monopoly of American technology giants, such as Google, Apple, Facebook, Amazon and Microsoft, as well as Chinese competitors, to assert their own sovereign rights. Private operators already control more than half of the submarine cable bandwidth. Additional risks to operational security are posed by the fact that an increasing number of cable operators are using remote management systems for their networks as a way of reduc-

strengthen digital sovereignty and correct home-grown regulatory and structural errors. The same can be said about excluding certain states that pose a security risk. We will continue to remain vulnerable as long as the best-bidder principle applies to tenders and non-European competitors. Sometimes even state-subsidized providers outbid trustworthy European security solutions, which are then applied in the area of critical infrastructure.

And it is especially here, in the area of critical infrastructure, that we need to refocus on Europe and rely solely on local solutions and operators to

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UK, have now begun to close this open flank. A new NATO Atlantic Command based in Norfolk, Virginia, has been tasked with protecting the transport and communication routes between North America and Europe. In turn, however, it is now essential to establish a fleet suited to the task of guaranteeing this security.

The commissioning of the first ship in the British Navy to protect submarine cables is an initial step, and a second ship is planned. But two ships alone will hardly be able to protect the more than 400 submarine cables in use worldwide, that is, unless other NATO partners, such as Germany, join in, and especially since at least 45 more ocean cables are to be laid by 2025. In addition, it is crucial to work with the telecom companies that have the equipment to monitor and control this large area.

Furthermore, it is not only submarine cables that are of great strategic importance for Europe's future as an economic power, as the world produces more and more data: Analysts predict that

Stepping in it

Israel is experiencing a seismic shift – or maybe just more of the same

BY DANA LANDAU

Having assumed office at the end of 2022 for his sixth term, Benjamin Netanyahu is back as Israel's prime minister. But this time he has the backing of a solid parliamentary majority and Israel's most right-wing government. His Likud party's coalition with Israel's ultra-orthodox and extreme-right parties has triggered alarm bells in Israel and beyond, with concerns raised about his government's long-term impact on Israel's political system and its implications for the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The proposed legal reforms have led to a wave of domestic protests that started in January, with large swaths of the public and the traditional establishment worried about their impact on Israel's democracy, rule of law, economy and international standing. Public outrage was initially triggered by announcements stating that representatives of the far-right, anti-LGBTQ+ Noam party would control extracurricular school programming and that discrimination against LGBTQ+ persons, for example in the provision of health services, would be rendered legal under religious freedom rights. But most of the criticism focuses on proposed legal reforms that many fear will involve the end of judicial oversight and curtail the judiciary's independence. At the heart of the reforms is the so-called override clause, which would allow a simple parliamentary majority to block the Supreme Court's ability to revoke laws, as well as proposed changes that would give lawmakers more influence in judicial appointments. Such reforms would dramatically change the nature of existing checks and balances and give a parliamentary majority, and the government, unprecedented power.

Protest and opposition to these reforms comes not only from the left (which has been all but obliterated electorally) but also from citizens across the political center and within the right, including figures with symbolic and political clout, such as former air force officials and ambassadors, scholars, as well as investors and workers in the country's booming high-tech industry. The unusually forceful voice of the business community, which is threatening to withdraw investments and capital from the country if the rule of law cannot be guaranteed, is notable, as this is not a group prone to making public comments on politics.

Netanyahu, who is currently standing trial in three cases of



You like me. You really, really like me. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu

corruption, claims the proposed reforms aim only to re-balance the separation of powers in Israel from a perceived interventionism by the Supreme Court. However, these reforms certainly go beyond mere personal interest in torpedoing his indictments. Rather, they seem to follow the playbook of democratic backsliding witnessed around the world, of which attacks on the judiciary are always key, as seen from Hungary to Turkey to Poland. While grave, these proposed reforms represent not so much a rupture

most incendiary was the appointment of Itamar Ben-Gvir – who has been indicted on several counts of incitement – as minister of national security, a portfolio that controls the border police in the West Bank. Ben-Gvir then wasted little time before visiting the Temple Mount/Al-Aqsa compound, despite having pledged to hold off on traveling to the flashpoint. Furthermore, the promise made in the coalition agreement with the Religious Zionism party to hand its leader, Minister of Finance Bezalel Smotrich, control

again announced that it would end security coordination with Israel. In the meantime, members of the international community continue to call for calm and reiterate their support for a two-state solution – a call that rings hollow in the absence of a credible peace process.

In this respect, too, it might be more accurate to speak of a long-term development than a rupture. The current escalation of violence in the West Bank is part of a spiral that began before the new, far-right government

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of Israel's democratic backsliding – even before the current incursions into the judiciary – have also been consistent in pointing to the question of Palestinian sovereignty amid optimism about the Abraham Accords and Israel's normalization agreements with the UAE, Bahrain, Morocco and Sudan. And here we are. The years of debates focused on “managing” or “shrinking” the Israeli-Palestinian conflict while advancing economic peace across the region – an appealing prospect to domestic and international audiences – served only to let settlement expansion continue as the prospects for Palestinian statehood shrunk. Throughout the past years, the radical right positioned itself to seize a moment like the current one.

So how are these two developments – the hollowing out of the rule of law in Israel-proper (a recent trend) and the emboldening of annexationist forces (an older trend) – linked? The pro-democracy protests in Tel Aviv have thus far largely excluded Israel's Palestinian population, even though they are the minority most likely to suffer from the lack of checks and balances in an Israel shaped by the proposed legal reforms. In addition, they rarely connect the dots between the risks to democracy the reforms pose and Israel's stained democratic track record as an occupying power over the last 50 years. Take, for example, the fact that Israel's Supreme Court – in whose defense tens of thousands flock to the streets every week – in no way lives up to the narrative propagated by those on the right of a court vehemently upholding dovish or pro-minority positions. The Court has, in fact, frequently upheld government policies, including those that involve demolishing the homes of dead terrorists, which appeals have argued constitute a form of collective punishment. Following decades of debates in academic and activist circles regarding the correct characterization of Israel's regime within and beyond the Green Line, the proposed reforms make abundantly clear the de facto erasure of the Green Line.

Much will now depend on how the international community, and Israel's traditional allies, most importantly the United States, will react to both of these developments. Whether the current moment signifies a seismic shift or marks the apex of a longer-running trend, it's an opportune time for the international community to take note of the forces that have precipitated the current state of affairs. If key international actors want to make up for lost time, now is the time to take action. ■

ON THE SECURITY FRONT, NETANYAHU'S APPOINTMENTS OF FAR-RIGHT MEMBERS OF HIS COALITION TO KEY MINISTERIAL POSTS HAS ALARMED WORLD CAPITALS AND HEIGHTENED TENSIONS ON THE GROUND

as a continuation of a trend that has taken shape over the past decade and a half. For years, civil society groups have warned of the increasingly commonplace hostile rhetoric and attacks waged against the judiciary as well as those against NGOs, the media and academics.

On the security front, Netanyahu's appointments of far-right members of his coalition to key ministerial posts has alarmed world capitals and heightened tensions on the ground. Perhaps

over the Civil Administration, the entity in charge of construction, infrastructure and security coordination in the West Bank, which was, until that point, under the jurisdiction of the Defense Ministry, prompted government legal experts to warn of a de facto annexation of the West Bank by Israel. The battle over authority between the security establishment and civilian ministries in the West Bank will likely play out over the coming months, as extremist elements of the set-

the rise again, reaching levels not seen in years. In reaction to the late January IDF operation that left 10 Palestinians dead in Jenin, the Palestinian Authority once

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came into power. Indeed, things began to spiral in the summer of 2021, during the broad coalition that ruled on a mandate to keep Netanyahu out of government and amid Israel's continued demolition of houses, a rise in settler violence, and the criminalization of Palestinian human rights organizations. The escalation of violence we've seen so far this year does not bode well for the future.

With regard to security issues, many civil society groups critical


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Direct messaging: John F. Kennedy and Nikita Khrushchev behind the mike.

MAD

As fears of nuclear war increase, it's worth looking

BY BERND GREINER

In the contemporary discourse on Putin's war in Ukraine, experts have drawn comparisons to what they consider comparable historical events. At the same time, however, a number of key historical incidents have been disregarded. For example, there is a passionate argument currently underway about whether the events of February 2022 are more like those of July 1914 or those of September 1938. People are also arguing about which label better suits the current leaders in Berlin: Are they sleepwalkers or appeasers? In contrast to these robust disputes, there is one historical event we've heard barely a peep about, namely the first successful atomic bomb test in the New Mexico desert in the summer of 1945. There would be no turning back when, four years later, the Soviet Union detonated a nuclear device of its own. Since that day, all forms of global political strategy and maneuvering have been shadowed by a fundamentally new fact: from that moment on, any war between great powers carried the risk of the complete annihilation of all peoples involved as well as the extensive devastation of the planet. With this in mind, it is fully understandable that a subcutaneous fear of the atom bomb is emerging again today. Unfortunately, however, the debate about how these fears were managed in the past – as well as an in-depth discussion about the conclusions we can draw from related historical events – is being pursued to a far lesser degree than would benefit us now.

It is also understandable that the current state of affairs in Ukraine would bring to mind the Cuban Missile Crisis of October 1962, in which the US and USSR clashed over the stationing of Soviet nuclear missiles in the Caribbean. The standoff between these two nations became so explosive that nuclear war was averted only at the very last moment and with a great deal of luck. One

might argue today, of course, that Havana is not Kyiv. And yet, this near-war of yesterday says more about the current war in Ukraine than most other milestones from years past. The fact that nuclear weapons are rather blunt military tools whose immense destructive power makes them entirely unsuitable for actual warfare is quite evident. The other side of the coin, however, is a highly volatile one, namely the relentless struggle to sharpen these weapons – or at least gain some kind of added political value from them – in times of peace. It is clear that Putin is playing precisely this game at the moment, especially in his repeated threats to actually use nuclear weapons. The idea behind this approach is both archaic and momentous, and involves a great power coming under the suspicion of not being able to draw any advantage from the most powerful instrument in its arsenal. For this nation to have remained a great power for so long, it has had to master the craft of intimidation and blackmail. If it ever failed to do so, it would face a forced relegation to the sidelines of world politics. Casting an air of mystery over one's intentions, sowing mistrust, exploiting uncertainty, blurring the line between a bluff and risky *va banque* and wearing down one's opponents: such have been the cornerstones of Russian policy for decades and still are today. An approach like this falls under the harmless name of deterrence; fear is its driving force, and its goal is to scare others to such an extent that one can impose one's will on them even under the most adverse conditions. Indeed, this has been the historical *modus operandi* on both sides.

John F. Kennedy, a US president much lauded for his cool intellect, indulged in this logic several times in 1962. "Khrushchev must not be certain that, where its vital interests are threatened, the US will never strike first. In some circumstances we might have to take the initiative." It is almost unnecessary to note

that it remains unclear what was meant by "vital interests" or "some circumstances." JFK continued: "We will not needlessly risk world-wide nuclear war, [...] but neither will we shrink from that risk when it must be faced. I have directed the Armed Forces to prepare for any eventualities." Conversely, the term "needlessly" was likely meant to imply that it might well be necessary to press the red button at the appropriate moment. The Kremlin pretended to be unimpressed and justified its shipment of 36 medium-range nuclear missiles to Cuba by flashing a further trump card: they argued that since the Americans had been positioning similar-range missiles in Turkey – that is, in the direct vicinity of the USSR – for years, it was high time to give the US a taste of its own medicine in an equivalent location.

Such exaggerated displays ultimately achieved a state of affairs once described by the physicist Carl Friedrich von Weizsäcker as the following: "The only way big bombs can fulfill their purpose of safeguarding peace and freedom is if they're never used. In the same vein, however, they will not be able to fulfill their purpose if everyone knows they will never be used. This is precisely why there is a danger that one day they actually will be used." An equally illuminating account might read as follows: the likelihood that things will escalate to that ultimate point increases proportionally with the duration and intensity of each confrontation. This is the case for one simple reason, which is that each crisis has its own dynamic; that is to say, each crisis causes upheavals that no one intended at the outset and hardly anyone knows how to contain in the end. For this reason, it would be careless to dismiss the poker game being played today with nuclear weapons as some kind of mere scaremongering. Such games can come back to haunt their originators at any time. In other words, deterrence is founded on preconditions that no one can control.

That being said, it would have been reasonable to expect Moscow to keep still in the early 1960s. Back then, the West was in a vastly superior position than its adversary in all matters relating to nuclear weapons. The US possessed five-and-a-half times the number of intercontinental missiles (230 to 42) plus, in contrast to US solid-fuel missiles, the Soviet models were only capable of becoming operational after hours of refueling and therefore had only a limited degree of suitability for war. With regard to nuclear warheads, the Soviets were outnumbered by the US, UK and France by a ratio of 1:17 (300 to 5000), and the US had more than 1,400 long-range bombers compared to only 155 aircraft bearing the Red Star. And yet, in spite of this inferior position, Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev chose to go on the offensive rather than submit to such a gro-tesque dominance. He put on a highly intimidating performance designed to make sure that no one

No matter what kind of questionable motives played a role in launching this arm-wrestling match, the consequences of the struggle would turn out to be far more serious. Indeed, as soon as both sides decided in favor of a test of strength rather than diplomatic rapprochement, the result was a mutual acceptance that everything willy-nilly was possible. When a US reconnaissance plane was shot down by Soviet anti-aircraft fire over Cuba, the White House assumed this was a deliberate escalation and began to prepare an appropriate response – not knowing that the local commander had ignored a vague ban on firing issued by the Kremlin. When a US military plane veered off course due to problems with its navigation system and ended up cruising through Soviet airspace for a seemingly never-ending amount of time, Defense Secretary Robert McNamara lost his cool, exclaiming: "This means war with the Soviet Union!"

rine captain's discretion whether to launch nuclear torpedoes at their pursuers or turn tail. To put it succinctly, in such situations, small things can throw everything off kilter and decide whether millions will live or die. For this reason, Kennedy soon deleted the grandiose concept of crisis management from his vocabulary. The president pointed out that no matter what a commander orders in extreme situations, his influence is nevertheless subject to strict limits if and when somewhere at the end of the chain of command there's "some son-of-a-bitch who doesn't get the word."

So far, there have been no such escalations in Ukraine. Still, there's no reason to glean comfort from this in any way. After all, the crude verbal attacks issued by Putin and his camarilla – including calls for the "denazification" of Ukraine and threatening rapid counterattacks in the event of an unspecified Western interference

THE CRUDE VERBAL ATTACKS ISSUED BY PUTIN AND INCLUDING CALLS FOR THE "DENAZIFICATION" AND THREATENING RAPID COUNTERATTACKS IN THE EVENT OF AN UNSPECIFIED WESTERN INTERFERENCE ARE PROVIDING EMOTIONAL FUEL TO THE FIRE OF UNRESTRAINED

got the impression he was afraid of the US. According to his logic, neutralizing the long arms of the US meant showing the world the uselessness of that nation's superior strength. As Khrushchev later explained to his inner circle, all of these moves – feigning unpredictability, making pinpricks and provoking resentment – were part of the game: "One must not shy away from driving others into a state of rage. Otherwise we'll never get anywhere. [...] Anybody with weak nerves will be pushed up against the wall."

And he had every reason to fear this was the case. No one knew why two Air Force interceptors, armed with nuclear-capable air-to-air missiles, had been sent up to support the stray planes, or what directives the pilots were given or why it took an hour and a half for the Pentagon to be informed of the events. And so the confrontations continued, including a number of incidents on the high seas in which Soviet submarines were forced to surface – and where it was left solely to the subma-

– only add emotional fuel to the fire of unrestrained behavior, especially in light of an entire array of potential coincidences, misperceptions and acts of negligence. The Cuban Missile Crisis, at any rate, teaches us that over-reactions are part and parcel of the power struggle between nuclear powers. Immediately after the US discovered that Soviet medium-range missiles had been stationed on Cuba, Florida began to resemble an army encampment. The British consul in Miami at the time



Men

g at the Cuban Missile Crisis for historical insight

said that it reminded him of the situation in southern England in June 1944 and the final days before the landing in Normandy. Other observers argued that the peninsula was likely to sink into the sea under the weight of all the military equipment massing there. Almost 600 tactical fighter-bombers had been set up across the state's airfields, equipped with fuel, bombs and onboard ammunition for thousands of attacks; the plan was to fly 1,190 sorties on the very first day of a potential war against Cuba. Under Army Command, eight divisions with a total of 120,000 soldiers and the largest mobilized contingent of paratroopers since 1944 were preparing for an amphibious landing east of Havana (just for comparison, 150,000 troops had been dropped at Normandy). The Navy had 180 ships on offer, including eight aircraft carriers and 26 destroyers. These were jaw-dropping numbers by any measure.

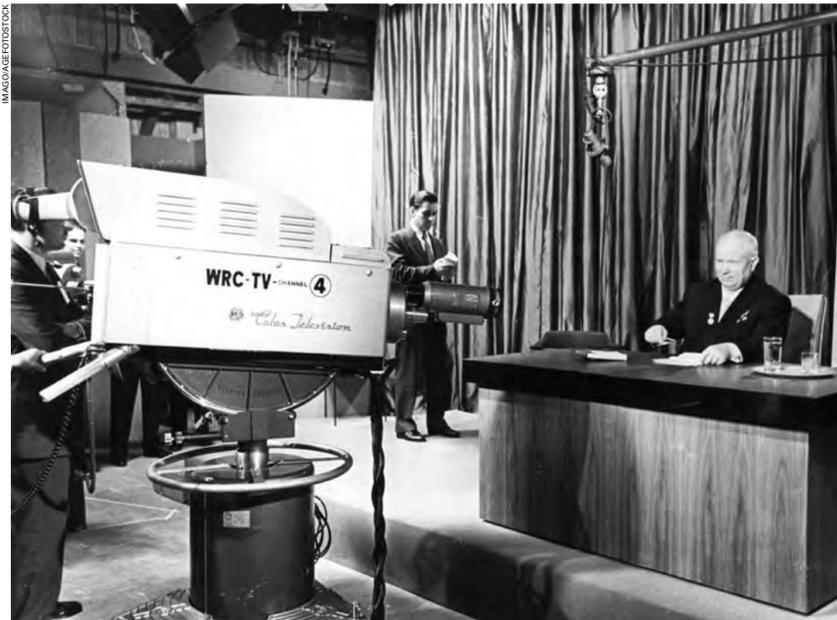
HIS CAMARILLA –
OF UKRAINE
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ED BEHAVIOR

Still, the objective of this massive deployment wasn't a military one. It was about politics, and especially about the psychology of power. Those three dozen Soviet missiles in Cuba hadn't changed anything about the true balance of power between the two superpowers, the US president and his most important advisors agreed. What was at stake here – much more importantly – was image and prestige. There was no way the US was going to give the impression it was shrinking away from a small war just

because of the risk of a big one; in other words, the US had no intention of committing suicide out of fear of its own death, as one common metaphor expressed it at the time. Strictly speaking, anyone displaying any type of weakness in these and similar situations will never be able to rid themselves of the stench.

In this respect, the 1962 crisis was less about what to do with Cuba and much more to do with the future of the US. In effect, it was a test run to show existing and potential rivals that they had no chance in a global competition with the US. It was also designed to prove Washington's will to power. The brash performance of the US in the Caribbean was aimed at putting the Soviets in a position from which they could only extricate themselves by means of an all-out war, while at the same time preventing them from taking this step by displaying the Washington's own superiority. Confident in their power, Kennedy's advisors called for a swift invasion of Cuba without any thought of the incalculable consequences. Drawing on the words of historian Barbara Tuchman, it was a quest for credibility so importunate as to border on self-hypnosis.

We hear a distant echo of this approach emanating from Ukraine today. Putin's threats with regard to nuclear bombs accentuate his ruthlessness, and the extensive arms deliveries from the US – which are practical, effective and intended to strengthen a nation directly under attack – point to a world beyond this particular stage. These moves simultaneously underscore a much broader aim and are directed primarily at China. They are intended as a warning not to challenge the US, no matter when or where. Unfortunately, as we've seen, this is precisely where the most severe danger lurks, that is, in a policy that sees the use of military force not as one means among many, but as the main instrument for asserting interests and as the most important measure of national standing. In the case of China, however – and this



cannot be emphasized enough – the West is dealing with an adversary who, unlike Putin, has no need to feign strength as a way to conceal their weaknesses.

It would appear that Vladimir Putin continues to be fully beholden to the logic of 1962. Only he knows what kind of devil prompted him to make the decision to attack a neighboring country. It is unlikely that he saw NATO's eastward expansion as representing a serious shift in the material balance of power. Something else must have presented itself to him as being more threatening than military hardware; perhaps it was the impression that Russia had maneuvered itself into a position in which it felt it had no means to counter this projection of power and thus found itself standing there like a pawn of the West. This is the point at which, at the latest, Khrushchev would have entered the scene with his familiar recipe of making the Americans look like paper tigers. Perhaps the idea of putting Ukraine to the test was simply too tempting for Putin, not least because there's no way to counter Russia's escalation dominance in those regions near its border, no matter what kind of equipment

is supplied to Ukraine by third parties. Ultimately, the posturing is all about symbolic capital, that is, about revitalizing the aura of a faded great power. With its own stated peaceful intentions, NATO can run up against this posturing all it wants. For Putin, the only thing that matters is that Russia's is was at stake. This was precisely the case during the Cuban Missile Crisis, as well, when overreaction was thought to be the only appropriate response.

On the one hand, in October 1962, all signs pointed to a coming storm. Irrespective of the tight spot both governments found themselves in, it was Kennedy who came under massive pressure from the public. Even without help from today's social media, which often acts as an accelerant to public opinion, a general furor spread; people argued that it wasn't possible to reach any kind of understand-

ing with a dictator, and that Khrushchev and his foreign minister Andrei Gromyko should not only be punished for engaging in blackmail but also expected to atone for their brazen lies to the president in personal talks and to the whole world at the United Nations. Politicians who got caught up in this maelstrom were accused of lacking leadership and being cowardly, indecisive, wavering, timid and cautious – with all allegations varying in tone and degree – such that they were forced to reckon with the potential end of their careers. The parallels to our present day need no explication.

On the other hand, Kennedy knew that the fixation on purely military measures would only lead to a dead end: "It isn't the first step that concerns me, but both sides escalating to the fourth and fifth step – and we don't go to the sixth because there is no one around to do so. We must remind ourselves we are embarking on a very hazardous course." In other words, it was time to do away with the rhetoric, refrain from making any high-sounding gestures and play for time. At that point, the president began establishing top-secret contacts to the oppos-

ing side. It is impossible to say how far Kennedy would have been willing to go; the pressure to order a strike was immense. Fortunately for him as well as for all of us, his adversary took away any need for him to make a decision: only hours before the Kremlin was to be presented with a face-saving offer – which stated that Washington would renounce an invasion of Cuba in return for the withdrawal of missiles there and possibly dismantle its own missiles in Turkey within six months – Nikita Khrushchev pulled the emergency brake. Shortly thereafter, he informed the Politburo of his decision to abandon the missile base in Cuba even without a material quid pro quo: "Any fool can start a war," he said, "and once he's done so, even the wisest of men are helpless to stop it – especially if it's a nuclear war."

What can we deduce from all of this? First of all, it would be naïve to hope that today's arsonist will transform into a fireman, as Khrushchev did in 1962. Putin is no Khrushchev and, unlike his predecessor, seems to overestimate himself immeasurably. This makes it all the more imperative to keep as many communication channels open as possible – not in spite of the fact that the prospects for compromise are so bleak but precisely because of it. This is certain to be an arduous path and possibly the rockiest one to take. But the alternative – insisting on absolutist demands and declaiming in public what everybody already knows – would achieve nothing other than a further hardening of the fronts.

The Cuban Missile Crisis is also worth looking at with regard to the future security order in Europe and beyond. If there were but one timeless experience we can draw on from the early 1960s, it's this: more nuclear weapons and more nuclear deterrence solve no problems, they are the problem. To ignore this insight would amount to sleepwalking through history. ■

The article originally appeared in the *Blätter für deutsche und internationale Politik*.

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The last of us: Russian President Vladimir Putin toasts the soldiers awarded the Gold Star Hero of Russia following a ceremony on the eve of Heroes of the Fatherland Day at St George's Hall of the Grand Kremlin Palace, Dec. 8, 2022, in Moscow.

PICTURE ALLIANCE / FINN / COSTFOTO

This Russian life

Moscow has practically abolished freedom of the press, but voices of opposition continue to broadcast from exile

BY KATJA GLOGER

So this is how it is, Russia today. A glimpse into Putin's brave new world. Take, for example, the New Year's Eve gala featured on Russian state TV. These kinds of events are always loud and colorful, a gaudy blend of patriotism and sentimentality. But this one had a particular quality to it. It was a war gala.

Members of the Russian armed forces sitting rigidly at round dinner tables, decked out in medal-strewn uniforms, yet somehow lost in the setting, obviously just back from the battle against supposed "Nazis" at the Ukrainian front. Seated around them, dressed to the nines, the cultural and media elite of the country, laughing and clapping, as if this Russian life were one big party. Also present, the hosts of leading pundit talk shows, including, of course, Vladimir Soloviev, the subject of EU sanctions, known for his abusive language and for discussing the use of Russian nuclear weapons on his daily broadcast, here greeting the "heroes" of the victorious Russian army.

On the New Year's Eve stage, they danced to a Ukrainian folk song and recited a poem about the impending bitter cold and hunger in the west, a fate now also befalling those stupid Germans, it was noted, who no longer want to buy gas from bighearted Russia.

It went on like this for hours, just a tiny slice of Putin's world, in which even the monstrosity of his war became a garish spectacle beneath a shower of confetti. And yet one also sees just how effective this propaganda actually is – a propaganda based on collective fantasies of the alleged grandeur of an empire, ostensible Orthodox exceptionality, simultaneous narratives of victory and victimhood, would-be enemies and the soul-crushing poison of perpetual lies.

Is there anyone left who can push back against this?

Feb. 24, 2022 was merely the grand conclusion to a trajectory that began with Putin's ascension to power almost 24 years prior; a development that people – many of them in Germany – refused to acknowledge for far too long. Within one year of taking office, Putin had seized control of the most important media outlets, above all television channels, which are the main source of information for the majority of Russians to this day. For years already, independent journalists had been working with one foot in prison, so to speak. Russia's

Kommersant had been bought by oligarch Alisher Usmanov. The power structures were clear. Critical reporting on the Kremlin was not impossible, but it was a permanent tightrope walk.

Feb. 24, 2022 and the so-called "fake news" laws issued shortly thereafter – which sought to crack down on the alleged "misinformation" and "discrediting" of the Russian Army and which carried up to 15 years in prison – were the final nails in the coffin of independent media in Russia. Ekho Moskvy was shut down, as was *Dozhd*. The police and

entire editorial teams left the country – among them from *Novaya Gazeta* and *Dozhd*. The Baltic capitals of Riga and Vilnius became centers of exile – for independent media teams from Belarus, as well. There, human rights organizations estimate that the country is holding well over 1,300 political prisoners, including 31 journalists.

The governments of the EU states of Latvia and Lithuania were quick to help, initially showing generosity by granting visas and residence permits. "This move literally saved lives," says

dered. The memory of this fate is very much alive, and mistrust grows with each day of war. Since partial mobilization last fall, very few visas have been issued to Russian citizens, and it is doubtful whether existing residence cards and work permits for journalists will be extended. Last December, *Dozhd* had its broadcasting license revoked for violating Latvia's media laws. It was said that issues of national security were at stake.

Many editorial teams want to go to ... Berlin. The German government promised early on that it

and their families; this marks a first step.

The key objective here is to keep going. To establish independent, counter-public, Russian-language journalism, no matter how small it may be. Today, Ekho Moskvy broadcasts per app from Berlin and via the YouTube channel *Zhivoy Gvozd* – which one might translate as "thorn in the side." Reporters from *Novaya Gazeta* have relocated. Belarusian colleagues are planning to move. And some members of the editorial staff at *Meduza*, the largest independent Russian news portal, currently based in Riga, might also relocate to Berlin. These teams make use of every medium they can: Telegram, podcasts, apps, newsletters, Twitter and streams on YouTube, which is not yet banned in Russia. They also provide instructions on how to set up Virtual Private Networks (VPNs), which allow users to disguise their location and thus evade any bans. They have hundreds of thousands of subscribers. And they also network with one another via the JX Fund – European Fund for Journalism in Exile, which was founded in Berlin and is partly supported by Germany's federal government. The fund also helps to develop viable business plans for media in exile.

It comes, of course, with a sad notion: that models designed to foster journalism in exile could be "scaled" – for journalists fleeing from other countries. From Afghanistan, for example, or Iran. Many Russian journalists feel guilty. They feel partly responsible for this war. All the more reason for them to see working in exile as an opportunity. They are aware of the risks. So be it. They continue to broadcast news about the war, covering the crimes taking place, calling out the perpetrators by name on all channels. Indeed, the excuse – so well known and used in Germany for many years – that no one could have known about "it," will not be credible in Putin's new Russian world.

TIME AND AGAIN, JOURNALISTS CRITICAL OF THE REGIME WERE MURDERED. AND, MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, THE PERPETRATORS AND OTHER DUBIOUS CHARACTERS RESPONSIBLE FOR THOSE MURDERS WERE NEVER IDENTIFIED

media and internet laws had become increasingly arbitrary. Reporters and editorial offices operated under the threat of being labeled "foreign agents" – a charge akin to treason – hanging over their heads like the sword of Damocles.

Time and again, journalists critical of the regime were murdered. And, more often than not, the perpetrators and other dubious characters responsible for those murders were never identified.

Editorial teams carried out their work under tremendous pressure: *Novaya Gazeta*, arguably Russia's most famous independent newspaper and a symbol of Perestroika, that breathlessly short interlude of freedom; and the small, vibrant and critical internet TV channel *Dozhd*, otherwise known as TV Rain. The radio station *Ekho Moskvy* had indeed found itself owned by Gazprom-Media. And the daily business newspaper

federal secret service (FSB) paid "visits" to local journalists critical of the regime; these threats, searches and arrests were clear and conducted in plain sight. The prominence of Dmitry Muratov, the Nobel Peace Prize laureate and longtime editor-in-chief of *Novaya Gazeta*, was of no help at all. The paper had its printing license taken away.

The verdict against Ivan Saffronov was a watershed moment: last September, the former *Kommersant* journalist and expert in defense industry issues, was formerly charged with "high treason" and sentenced to 22 years in a labor camp. It was also a warning sign for the few remaining independent journalists left in the country. From that moment on, they would be forced to carry out their work de facto underground.

Hundreds went into exile, sometimes having to make that decision within a matter of

hours. Entire editorial teams left the country – among them from *Novaya Gazeta* and *Dozhd*. The Baltic capitals of Riga and Vilnius became centers of exile – for independent media teams from Belarus, as well. There, human rights organizations estimate that the country is holding well over 1,300 political prisoners, including 31 journalists.

Today, however, this practice has become increasingly controversial. The people of the Baltic states suffered for decades under Soviet occupation, with tens of thousands being deported, mur-

would provide streamlined assistance to imperiled journalists and human rights activists. For example, Foreign Minister Annalena Baerbock promised: "You can come to Germany, there will be no bureaucratic hurdles." Claudia Roth, Germany's State Minister for Culture and the Media, also sought to give these "skilled democracy workers" long-term prospects. A bold idea. Berlin – which had already functioned as a center of Russian exile after the 1917 Revolution – becoming the European capital of independent Russian media.

As is so often the case, however, a closer look at real-life outcomes revealed a large gap between intended impact and implementation: competing areas of administrative responsibility, security issues, the German bureaucratic labyrinth. By late 2022, humanitarian visas had been granted to roughly 100 Russian journalists

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wHim



Afghan women have been forced to adapt to fluctuating, male-dictated dress codes for over 100 years

BY PARAND

I've always been fascinated by the words of Fyodor Dostoevsky. One line, in particular, has stayed with me for years. In his novel *Poor Folk*, he says something to the effect of: "The degree of man's freedom is directly related to his spiritual greatness." I would like to slightly modify this weighty sentence and apply it to the situation of women in Afghanistan, whereby it would read something like this: "The degree of women's freedom is directly related to the prevailing whim of men in this country." In fact, those who hold power in Afghanistan – most of whom are men – have, at times, lowered this bar low enough to crush the bones of Afghan women. From time to time, they've also been known to raise the bar out of Afghan women's reach.



For women in Afghanistan, the word *freedom* is used not in its proper sense, but rather as a cliché to describe females who've strayed a bit too far from strict traditional norms. "So-and-so is free," people will say, referring primarily to the way she is dressed. Women who wear shorter hemlines or tighter, European-style clothing are described as being *free*, thereby implying that they lack modesty and propriety. For most people in Afghanistan, a "respectable" woman will wrap herself in a chador or cover herself from head to toe in black clothing and never wear makeup.

The clothing worn by women in Afghanistan and the extent of women's political participation in that country have long since functioned as determinants of political success and the perpetuation of patriarchal authority. Starting with the reform-oriented ruler Amanullah's ascension to power in 1919, women in Afghanistan have been subjected to a series of fluctuating decrees dictating how they should dress. In 1927 and 1928, Amanullah traveled abroad, visiting different countries in Africa, Asia and Europe. In the course of these journeys, he became an enthusiastic follower of modern European culture, ultimately concluding that successful social reform would be impossible without the presence and participation of women. Immediately upon his return to Afghanistan, he granted women access to social and political spheres and eventually called on them to remove their chadors – the garments used at that time to comply with laws governing veiling conventions. After that, women were instructed to appear at official gatherings, movie theaters and state institutions without veils. According to historians, there were even signs stating that it was forbidden for veiled women to move beyond certain points in the capital city. Amanullah's wife, Queen Soraya, was the first woman to appear in public without a veil, announcing that the coverings impaired a woman's ability to breathe. Some women with no inclination to remove their veils were dismayed and shocked, while others welcomed the chance to throw off the cumbersome cloth. Unfortunately, many women suffered even greater social exclusion as

a result of this decree: not only were they no longer allowed to visit cinemas, state institutions and public meetings, they sometimes weren't even allowed to leave the house.

Sayyida Bibi is a one-hundred-year-old woman and likely one of the few remaining individuals who experienced this reform in person. She remembers the repercussions of the announcement as follows: "We lived in Kabul. My father worked in the offices of the government of Amanullah Khan and had worked at the court of his father as well. In the streets and at the bazaar, rumors were circulating that the new king had ordered women to bare their faces. Some women whose husbands and fathers worked for the government obeyed the government decree. They removed their chador and shed tears of joy. My mother was among this group of women. But some women didn't receive permission from their families to remove their veil. This meant they could no longer go outside. There were rumors that government officials were removing women's chadors by force on the street." These reforms ultimately posed too much of a threat to the interests of mullahs, politicians and authoritarian forces; they created the foundation for revolts and eventually led to the fall of Amanullah.

Amanullah was succeeded by Habibullah Kalakani, a man who began his career as a simple soldier at Amanullah's court. He is said to have later engaged in a life of robbery and banditry, all in the name of religion. Soon thereafter, he was able to incite a revolt with support from foreign groups, ultimately taking the reins of office.

During the nine months in which he served as Emir of Afghanistan, the rules changed once again: the veil became mandatory for women, schools for girls were shut down and women were allowed to leave the house only when accompanied by a man. All

of Amanullah's reform measures were suspended and declared invalid. In other words, women were once again forced out of society and back into the veil. That is, until Mohammad Zahir Shah ascended to the throne.

Mohammad Zahir Shah waited for the perfect moment to cautiously facilitate women's reentry into society. At the Independence Day celebrations of 1959,

years, also come to view it as a form of protection, something they could safely hide behind. My grandmother told me that some women found it difficult to remove the veil without feeling exposed.

Before her passing, my grandmother described a particular event during that era: Zahir Shah had invited all government officials to his palace, including



THE CLOTHING WORN BY WOMEN IN AFGHANISTAN AND THE EXTENT OF WOMEN'S POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THAT COUNTRY HAVE LONG SINCE FUNCTIONED AS DETERMINANTS OF POLITICAL SUCCESS AND THE PERPETUATION OF PATRIARCHAL AUTHORITY

mately taking the reins of office. During the nine months in which he served as Emir of Afghanistan, the rules changed once again: the veil became mandatory for women, schools for girls were shut down and women were allowed to leave the house only when accompanied by a man. All

the women of the royal family appeared without veils. Compulsory veiling laws were subsequently rolled back once again, striking fear into the hearts of countless women in the country. Many of the women who had come to accept wearing a veil as their destiny had, after so many

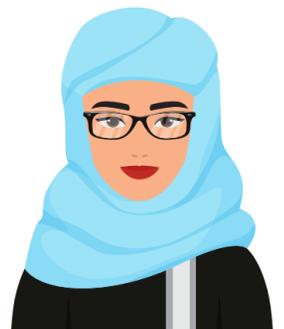
her grandfather, who was one of his officials. The aim of the celebration was to lift the veil and thus render female government employees more visible in the social sphere. Because her grandfather didn't want to lose his job, he decided to take her along with him. But first he showed her a picture from an Iranian magazine and told her to dress like the women in the magazine. She had always worn traditional clothes – a loose dress, white embroidered pants and a veil – and was worried that she would have to remove her veil and attend a prominent ceremony in a dress and nylon stockings. At that time, hair salons were not very common and there were maybe one or two in the entire city where women could get their hair and makeup done. She had worn her hair tied up in a bun all her life. But now she was expected to know exactly how she should get her hair styled without becoming a laughing stock in the process. She decided to style her hair like the women wearing thin headscarves. On the day of the celebration, she removed her regular clothes and put on the nylon stockings and knee-length dress her husband had laid out for



fact, a means of gaining political power. The Mujahedeen was aware of this, prompting them to decree that women wear the black hijab traditionally worn by Arab women. As a sign of gratitude for Arab support during the jihad, they propagated this garment, declaring that no girl or woman would be allowed to leave her home without a heads-

carf or chador. In all the chaos and confusion surrounding the issue of veiling, Afghan women now found themselves back at a point they thought they'd moved beyond 62 years earlier, during the rule of Habibullah Kalakani.

Afghan women experienced these new laws regarding veiling and social participation as the height of injustice. There's no way they could have known then that the Taliban would soon enter the political stage and force them to wear the hijab. In 1996, the Mujahedeen government crumbled under the weight of greed and capricious behavior. The Taliban marched into the capital, shuttered all girls' schools and restricted women's freedom of movement. They forcibly and mercilessly removed women from all areas of social life. The only exceptions to these rules were female doctors and nurses, who were nevertheless subjected to strict religious scrutiny and often beaten when they didn't comply with veiling decrees. My mother was working in the department of health education at the time. She was beaten with a whip several times and came home time and again with swollen shoulders and arms.



With the advent of the interim government and the inauguration of Hamid Karzai, the first president after the end of the Taliban's reign, the likelihood increased that women's veiling would become optional, as the new constitution did not explicitly mention the veil or women's clothing. The women of Afghanistan then proceeded to take off their chadors, but didn't dare remove their headscarves as well. Twenty years passed amid excitement and hope that democracy would prevail and women's rights be defended. Unfortunately, as



To protect the author's anonymity, PARAND is a pseudonym. This article first appeared on ZEIT Online on Jan. 6, 2023.

the saying goes, good intentions are not enough! The Taliban's return to power in Afghanistan – a difficult pill to swallow for most of us – means that the country's women are once again subject to terrible oppression. For them, the wheel of fate has turned once more, this time coming to a halt on the diktat to wear black clothes.



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The Security Times

SPECIAL EDITION OF THE GERMAN TIMES FOR THE 59TH MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE

Something is rotten

A call for a broader – and more grown-up – definition of corruption

BY ZEPHYR TEACHOUT

Twenty-five years after the birth of the global anti-corruption movement, it's time to grow up. While the community nourishing the movement may be mature, the underlying framework for understanding corruption is not, and its immaturity is fostering global security risks.

The modern movement arguably began with a historic speech in 1996, in which World Bank President James Wolfensohn called out the “cancer of corruption” and demanded global action. In the following decade, energized by US support, European scandals and donor pressure, international anti-corruption agreements proliferated, including the Inter-American Convention Against Corruption (1997), the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention (1997), the Criminal Law Convention Against Corruption (1999), the African Union Convention on Preventing and Combating Corruption (2003) and the United Nations Convention Against Corruption (UNCAC) (2003). In rapid, almost frantic form – following years in which corruption was treated as a second-tier issue – something like a rough consensus on global corruption emerged.

Achieving consensus in the face of divergent traditions and laws was no easy task. To manage this challenge, the international community converged on an extremely narrow understanding of corruption, one that revolved around egregious acts, like outright payments to government officials in exchange for contracts. This narrow approach extended to the consensus vision of what constitutes effective anti-corruption prevention. The demands on member countries were vague, and the action items tended toward transparency and intergovernmental cooperation. At the same time, the anti-corruption movement also embraced criminalization and transparency, instead of structural reforms, as the tool of choice. The UNCAC, for instance, the only binding multilateral agreement governing corruption, requires that signatories *criminalize* certain forms of bribery.

In the early years, there were reasons to be bullish about the successes of the anti-corruption movement. It led to strong expectations in terms of transparency. The new global consensus changed priorities and provided morale and support to domestic anti-corruption activists. Furthermore, it ushered in a new lens with which to understand domestic and global challenges, and allowed people to see the pernicious impacts of corruption as well as the threats that corruption poses to security, stability, prosperity and freedom.

the broken-windows model of policing developed. If only we could get countries to crack down on police officers shaking down citizens, and companies bribing foreign officials, perhaps it could lead to a shift in norms and expectations, and then countries will crack down on kleptocracy, too.

or appointed offices) instead of those who wield governing power, the UNCAC implicitly exculpates private parties from the charge of public corruption. The instrument relies on a state identifying formal obligations and then punishing their betrayal, a structure that can lead to knotty questions when different states have very different formal roles. By focusing on individual acts as the apex of corruption, it encourages actions against petty bureaucratic

The rule of one he describes as either monarchy or tyranny; the rule of a few as either an aristocracy or an oligarchy; and the rule of the many he denotes as either a polity or mob rule. The fundamental difference between the good and corrupted government, according to Aristotle, lies in the psychological orientation of those who govern: Corrupt governments are selfish; ideal governments seek the public good. Explaining the difference between a tyranny and a monarchy, he writes: “The tyrant looks to his own advantage, the king to that of his subjects.” A tyrant is a king who “pursues his own good”; an oligarchy is an aristocracy that pursues its own good; and mob rule is a publicly governed polity whose constituent parts each pursue their own selfish interests.

Under a mature approach, which would encompass what is sometimes called institutional corruption as well as explicit bribes, we would pursue a structural, prophylactic approach, one that focuses on disabling centralizing power and conflicts of interests. In other words, it would highlight problems of concentrated private power and monopolization, as well as campaign-funding regimes and media-funding regimes. Anti-monopoly law would be part of such an approach, because intelligently structured competition makes it harder to capture any institution. Corruption in more decentralized systems may still exist, but it doesn't threaten global security in the same way and is easier to address.

A mature approach recognizes that corrupt systems are not just a collection of individual corrupt acts, but involve networks and interconnected systems, private and public entanglement, payment systems that flow in multiple directions, and engage multiple arms of a government. A corrupt governing regime like Russia's depends on concentrated power with its attendant systems of disciplining dissidents and whistleblowing.

The challenge with the mature approach – and the reason it is so difficult – is twofold. First, it will implicate elites and powerful companies that thrive in the current environment. Second, it does not lead to the same reforms in every country, because the methods of appropriating governing power for selfish ends are so various. One of the great corrupting methods of English royalty in the 18th century, for instance, was offering paid civil service jobs to parliamentarians in exchange for their loyalty; how could the reformers of that era have anticipated that corporate spending around campaigns on social media would be one of the great corrupting methods of 21st-century America?

A mature vision will doubtless mean fewer widely ratified treaties. So why not just stick with the narrow and the clear, given that it will likely be impossible to achieve consensus, let alone a broad agreement across major powers? The US trajectory over the last 40 years should be a warning to the global community about what can happen if you embrace a narrow vision.

While the US has always had a problematic campaign-financing system, where private donors can buy influence by paying for campaigns, it became much worse in the 1980s, when the Supreme Court began striking down a series of essential prophylactic anti-corruption laws. For instance, it deemed unconstitutional laws that capped the total amount of money a donor can give to candidates around the country. In *Citizens United v. Federal Election Commission*, it struck down laws that

banned corporate spending in elections. The Court did so on the premise that these laws weren't really anti-corruption laws. The Supreme Court redefined corruption to mean only quid pro quo corruption, which it defined as explicit exchanges. In other words, the Supreme Court took a broad tradition and squeezed its value out of it, leaving the country with an official definition that is quite narrow – but that aligns perfectly with UNCAC.

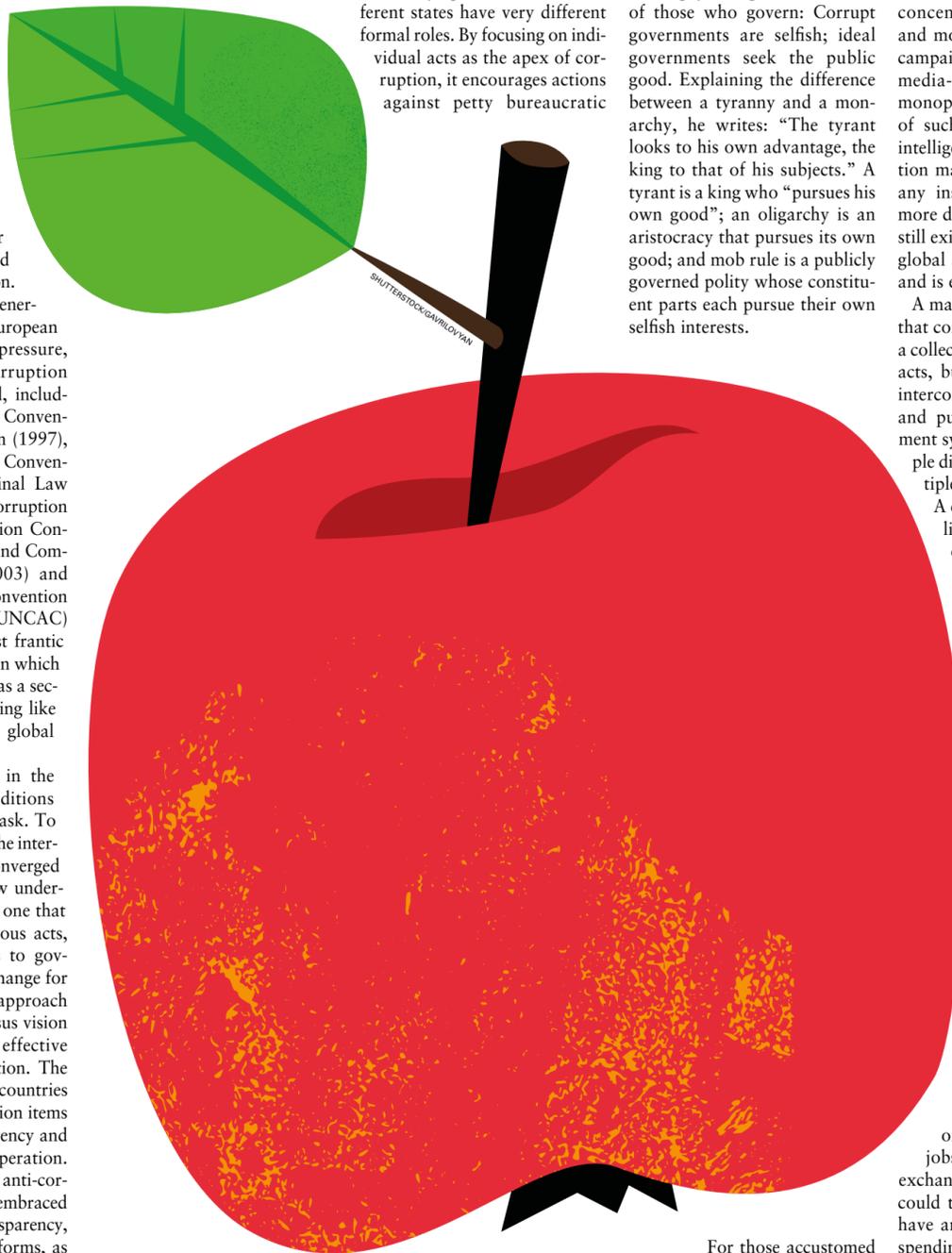
As a result, according to every new Corruption Perception Index and every observer of democracy in the US, American democracy is becoming more fragile and weaker in the face of corrupting influences.

The US experience also shows how thin a reed criminal law can be. Beginning in 1999, and continuing through several of its decisions, the US Supreme Court has repeatedly hollowed out the content of criminal bribery laws, largely because of a perceived risk that they are insufficiently clear and threaten legitimate political activity. The remaining tools are strong according to standards of international law, but reach only the most heavy-handed, unsophisticated operators. Few would argue that greater enforcement of these blunt instruments alone would lead to substantial change.

Everyone in the anti-corruption community knows that the implications of corruption go much deeper than anything that can be formalized and ratified in a treaty. China funnels billions of dollars to companies in return for political favors. This leads to many problems, including that we cannot trust that statements by those companies represent their corporate interests, as opposed to the interests of the People's Republic of China. At the same time, lobbyists representing foreign countries donated \$33 million in US elections in 2020; we expose ourselves with a system that dangerously privatizes and destabilizes diplomacy, but lies comfortably outside the confines of the global consensus around corruption. The weakness of US and European institutions to lobbying and campaign contributions may tempt countries like China to more aggressive actions, just as Germany's exposure to Russian energy power tempted Putin to invade Ukraine.

The Latin root *rumpo* means “to break, shatter, burst open, destroy, violate,” and the Latin root *co* means “with.” Corruption, the scourge of all governments, democratic and autocratic, represents the disintegration and destabilization of an institution from within, the dangerous deterioration of an institution's own. The favorite historical metaphors for corruption are those of decay and rot, and for good reason, as like a rotten apple, a corrupt system has the power to spread from one institution to another, and from one country to another. The risks are clear; corruption destabilizes countries, regions and the world and leads to rising violence and civil war; it enables invasions like that of Ukraine; and it radically exacerbates inequality. It demoralizes. And when a corrupt system becomes strong enough, it destroys free and open discourse.

It will take a new – and old – framework of understanding corruption to slow it down. ■



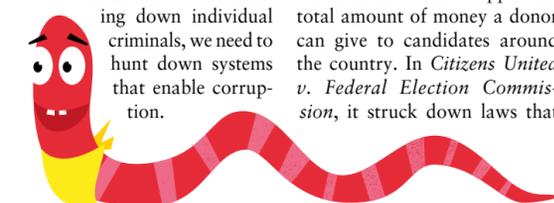
forms of corruption, instead of grand and institutional corruption. And by focusing on criminal law, it endorses the most corruptible of the anti-corruption tools: selective prosecution.

In short, there is a real risk that if the global anti-corruption movement continues down the same path it has followed for 25 years, it will undermine global security.

For a mature approach, we need to look back a few thousand years to Aristotle. The approach he suggests is functional, not formal; systemic, not individual. It is agnostic on the particular form of government, focusing instead on the use of governing power, whether it is formally held or just functionally held.

ZEPHYR TEACHOUT

is a professor at Fordham Law School and the author of several books, including *Corruption in America: From Benjamin Franklin's Snuff Box to Citizens United*, Harvard University Press.



Enough!

A chance for the international community to practice its preaching

BY BRIAN CONCANNON

The international community has a brief but historic opportunity to support a watershed change in Haiti that would restore democratic, rules-based governance. The opportunity stems from two recent failures: of Haiti's corrupt, repressive government, which now lacks a single elected official, and of efforts by powerful international community actors to prop up the government through military intervention. The window of opportunity is not wide – and failure to act immediately risks Haiti's descent into deeper crisis.

The terms of the last of Haiti's remaining elected officials – ten senators – ended on Jan. 9. All elected positions are now vacant or filled by unconstitutional appointees, with no elections scheduled. This moment has been a long time coming. These final senators had been unable to actually legislate since January 2020, when the terms of most of their parliamentary colleagues expired. When the terms of Haiti's elected mayors and other local officials expired in July 2020, the government illegally appointed replacements. The term of the last president, Jovenel Moïse, had expired by most accounts in February 2021, though he remained in office until his assassination the following July. Supreme Court vacancies – some resulting from the unconstitutional removal of justices – deprive that body of a quorum.



Steep decline: Jalousie district of Port-au-Prince, Haiti.

PICTURE ALLIANCE / REUTERS | RICARDO ARDUENGO

Since August 2021, Haiti has been led by de facto Prime Minister Ariel Henry. Henry ascended to power not through a constitutional mechanism, but via an announcement by the Core Group – comprising foreign governments and inter-governmental

organizations, including the EU, Germany, France, Spain and the US. A prosecutor subsequently implicated Henry in President Moïse's assassination, but the PM deflected the accusation by firing the prosecutor. Neither Henry nor anyone else has been

formally charged in Haiti for the president's murder.

Haiti's democracy has suffered frequent starts and stops since the 1986 departure of President Jean-Claude "Baby Doc" Duvalier. The largest previous stops came from military coups that

overthrew elected President Jean-Bertrand Aristide in 1991 and again in 2004. The current crisis, by some measures a new low, is the culmination of twelve years of tenacious power accumulation by a movement centered around the ruling Parti haïtien Tèt Kale

party (PHTK). The PHTK has persistently dismantled accountability mechanisms since it won contested elections in 2011. In addition to neutralizing Parliament and the courts, the PHTK has avoided electoral accountability by never running an election that was timely or fair – and no elections whatsoever since 2016. It has packed the public service with loyalists, especially the police and judiciary. The PHTK has also cowed the press. Eight journalists were killed in Haiti in 2022 – more than anywhere else except Ukraine and Mexico – including Romelo Vilsaint, who was murdered in October by police who opened fire at journalists protesting the illegal detention of another journalist arrested while covering a previous protest.

As is widely reported, the Haitian people are now under siege by armed gangs that by some estimates control over half the country. The causes of the scale of this violence and corruption are complex, and include the hospitable environment created by the PHTK's undermining of the police and justice systems. Furthermore, direct PHTK support has been critical to the dissolution of the rule of law: Harvard Law School and Haitian Human Rights organizations have established that PHTK officials' collaboration with gangs on deadly attacks against dissidents was widespread and political enough to constitute crimes against humanity.

Even the police, stacked with PHTK loyalists, appear to have

ADVERTORIAL



Globally recognized threat hunters: Kaspersky's Global Research and Analysis Team (GReAT)

The cyber threat landscape is changing rapidly and becoming increasingly complex. Technical solutions such as endpoint security protect against various threats. However, these should urgently be complemented by the component of human expertise. The buzzword of the moment is Threat Intelligence (TI). Waldemar Bergstreiser, Head of B2B Germany at Kaspersky, explains in an interview, what benefits Threat Intelligence offers to companies and what they should look for when choosing a provider.

Mr Bergstreiser, cybercriminals are constantly developing their tactics and methods and adapting them to current developments. Cybersecurity solutions provide a remedy here – or at least they should. Many providers now also offer Threat Intelligence in their portfolio. What is this about?

Waldemar Bergstreiser: While threat data is more or less a list of possible threats, Threat Intelligence looks at the big picture: the data is analysed in a broader context. On this basis, companies can make faster and better-informed security decisions. In the fight against cyberattacks, TI promotes proactive behaviour by providing comprehensive insights into the threat landscape. This enables companies to anticipate risks and strengthen their systems stra-

“A reactive approach to cybersecurity is no longer adequate!”

Predictive behaviour and faster security decisions – how Threat Intelligence helps companies combat cyber threats

tegically. Today, a reactive approach to cybersecurity is simply not sufficient.

This all sounds highly technical. Is Threat Intelligence only useful for large companies with their own security department?

Waldemar Bergstreiser: No, Threat Intelligence can be used by any company – regardless of size. Either the company itself has a security team that knows how to handle it, or they outsource TI via a Managed Detection and Response (MDR) service. By the way, this solution is not only beneficial for smaller companies. Larger companies also take advantage of experienced external experts helping them to assess current cyber threats and take defensive measures.

Do companies already use Threat Intelligence intensively?

Waldemar Bergstreiser: We have current figures from the financial sector in Germany that provide a good insight. These companies are very advanced in using Threat Intelligence services: A total of 99 per cent employ at least one corresponding service. So, awareness of the significance of Threat Intelligence seems to be quite high in the financial sector already. However, many companies do not yet have all the TI services they consider relevant in place.

Which Threat Intelligence services are most important?

Waldemar Bergstreiser: There is no general answer to that. Basically,

Threat Intelligence is complementary to the company's IT infrastructure. However, there are many different TI functions and a wide variety of available sources and services. This often makes it difficult for companies to understand which solution covers their requirements. Therefore, it is very important that the service can be individually adapted to the needs of the company.

What else should companies look for when choosing a provider?

Waldemar Bergstreiser: Companies should choose a provider who monitors and analyses the system 24/7. This way, the experts can find weak points at any time and immediately initiate security measures. In addition, the supplier should always provide the latest threat data in almost real time.

High-quality Threat Intelligence must rely on a recognized team of experts with proven experience in detecting complex threats. It must also integrate smoothly with the company's existing security processes. Good Threat Intelligence relieves the burden on internal cybersecurity departments by providing comprehensive automation capabilities. This frees the specialists from routine tasks and gives them the time to concentrate on higher priority goals.

What are the main advantages of Kaspersky's Threat Intelligence services?

Waldemar Bergstreiser: We have 25 years of experience in cyber threat detection and analysis and our team of international researchers and analysts is highly respected worldwide. Kaspersky Threat Intelligence gives companies direct access to technical, tactical, operational and strategic Threat Intelligence. We are very proud of the recent cooperation between Kaspersky and Microsoft. As a result, our threat data feeds are now integrated into Microsoft Sentinel.



Waldemar Bergstreiser, Head of B2B Germany at Kaspersky

Visit the shortlink kas.pr/ti-services to learn more about Kaspersky Threat Intelligence and sign up for a free trial.

The report „Cybersecurity: Focus on the financial sector“ is available for download under the shortlink kas.pr/finance-report.

kaspersky BRING ON THE FUTURE

lost patience with PHTK support for the gangs. On Jan. 27, police officers enraged by the gang execution of seven of their colleagues one day earlier attacked the prime minister's residence. When they discovered Dr. Henry was not at home but rather in an airplane preparing to land at the airport, the police invaded that facility. No one was hurt, but the attack generated panic and forced international flights to divert from Haiti and the prime minister to flee through a back door.

Dismantling accountability systems has facilitated spectacular PHTK corruption, including an estimated \$2 billion stolen or misspent from Venezuela's Petro-Caribe aid program. The government's looting of the treasury and consequent deficit spending generated inflation that dwarfs the price increases stemming from the war in Ukraine. Haiti's inflation has exceeded 15% each year since 2019, and hit 47% for the month of October 2022. GDP has not grown since 2018. Over a third of all Haitians face a severe food crisis, and in October, the UN reported that Level 5 ("catastrophic") hunger has been reached in Haiti for the first time.

The PHTK's economic misery, corruption and repression have generated massive opposition, which reached critical levels of intensity last year. Formal civil society groups – civic, business, labor, peasant, religious – courageously denounce the government and convene persistently to propose alternatives. Grassroots groups organize massive protests that periodically shut the country down, sometimes for days. As the most concerted, and threatening, protests to date surged nationwide last fall, the PHTK government requested on Oct. 7 that the UN "authorize the immediate deployment of a specialized armed force."

The international community has supported the PHTK since party founder Michel Martelly was elected president in controversial 2011 elections. Power-

ful actors found President Martelly and his successors easy to work with. The PHTK leaders supported MINUSTAH, the UN Peacekeeping mission from 2004–2017, even defending it against claims from the victims of the cholera epidemic introduced by the reckless disposal of peacekeepers' human waste. The PHTK complied with requirements from the IMF and other international financial institutions (IFI), including a controversial termination of fuel subsidies. The party refrained from the kind of provocative demands on the international community that its more leftward predecessors made, such as calling for restitution of Haiti's independence debt to France and pushing back on IFI austerity measures.

The keystone of current international support to Haiti's government is an insistence that any

introduced an authorizing resolution to the Security Council and Canada reached out to other countries for troops. But four months later, the resolution had yet to even a vote. At the Jan. 24 UN Security Council meeting on Haiti, Guterres and others continued to support the mission, but Canada's UN Ambassador Bob Rae appeared to put aside the idea of a specialized armed force, "pointing to the history of large military interventions in Haiti that have failed to bring about long-term stability for Haitians, and emphasizing that all solutions must be Haitian-led and Haitian-owned to ensure a sustainable impact."

Security Council dynamics, further complicated by the war in Ukraine, have always posed a challenge to the approval of military intervention, but in this case, the more fundamental

left Canada and the US unwilling to lead the intervention, so they sought a country from Latin America or Africa to take on the challenge. After some initial optimism, no country has stepped forward to help. As Ralph Gonsalves, Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines noted: "I don't want anybody to interpret us as going to send the police there to help to prop up the government, which so many people are contending inside of Haiti doesn't possess legitimacy."

With intervention looking unlikely, the international community is now placing its eggs in the basket of the December 21 National Consensus for an Inclusive Transition and Fair Elections, the latest in a series of political accords proposed by the government to counter more popular civil society accords. The December 21 Accord does con-

tain promising language on building consensus, fighting insecurity and moving towards elections, but it does not actually share any of the government's existing power, and it would keep the de facto prime minister in office for at least another year.

Haitians immediately rejected the accord. Although the government claims that the accord has over 500 signatories, Haitians note that this does not include

by enthusiasm abroad. The EU "welcomed it with interest." The UN mission in Haiti told the Security Council that "the agreement, whose adherents are growing every day, is indeed the most promising sign to emerge from dialogue efforts until now."

Haitians do not want the international community's soldiers or interference any more than powerful countries would want it in their territory or in that of their neighbors. Haitians want the international community to respect the rules it insists that others respect, and allow Haiti the sovereignty and democracy that those rules guarantee. Taking the rules-based international order seriously would

mean the international community ceasing to prop up Haiti's repressive, unconstitutional government. De facto Prime Minister Henry and the PHTK are rationally playing the cards in their hand, and will continue doing so until the game changes. They cannot win a fair election, so they have no incentive to make any compromises that might oblige them to organize one. The PHTK supporting fair elections, after 12 years of building power by refusing them, would be like the leopard changing its spots – and also pulling out its own teeth and claws. As long as the international community keeps propping up the PHTK, there will be no cost, and much benefit, to intransigence.

Ambassador Rae's acknowledgement of past mistakes is a good start. So are sanctions that Canada, the US and Switzerland have been imposing since October, many of them targeting top former PHTK leaders. But none of this will make a difference unless the international community addresses the nut of the problem in Haiti: its propping up the PHTK through the effective veto on negotiations.

Oddly enough, the widespread opposition to the de facto regime in Haiti – and distrust of the international community – underscores the opportunity for Haiti to get back on the democracy path. Haitians are coming together, across party, class and other lines that often frustrate collaboration, because PHTK misrule has demonstrated that the existence of democracy itself is more important than their previous disagreements about how democratic power is obtained and exercised. Haitians who might have looked abroad for help are now convinced that only Haitians can get their democracy back. If the international community is serious about a rules-based international order, let's give them a chance to succeed while there's still time.

THE PHTK'S ECONOMIC MISERY, CORRUPTION AND REPRESSION HAVE GENERATED MASSIVE OPPOSITION, WHICH REACHED CRITICAL LEVELS OF INTENSITY LAST YEAR

solution to the crisis include the PHTK. This insistence is anathema to many Haitians, who struggle to understand how a political movement that has worked so assiduously for unaccountable power could or should be part of a return to a rules-based governance. But opposition leaders also fear that Core Group members are likely to scuttle any solution that does not meet their conditions.

International community support for the de facto government has also included enthusiastically backing the request for international troops. But that process may have run out of steam. In October, UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres quickly endorsed the request. The US

problem was that Haitians themselves opposed it. Although many exasperated Haitians believe that international troops are the only possible solution, the vast majority of political parties, civil society organizations and protesters in the streets have rejected them as yet another case of the international community propping up their hated government. Haitians also echo Ambassador Rae's humility about international troops, pointing to the experience of MINUSTAH, which spent 13 years and \$7 billion without making substantial improvements to their lives.

Haitian opposition, and the specter of peacekeepers fighting the people they were sent to help,

tain promising language on building consensus, fighting insecurity and moving towards elections, but it does not actually share any of the government's existing power, and it would keep the de facto prime minister in office for at least another year.

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BRIAN CONCANNON is executive director of the US-based Institute for Justice & Democracy in Haiti

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BY NAYEF AL-RODHAN

Outer space has become a critical asset for the modern state. Satellites in outer space are crucial for life on earth: We are dependent on satellites to support everything from vital supply chains, emergency communications and military operations to weather forecasting, financial markets, navigation and electrical power grids. But as technology advances, space activities are increasingly exposed to potential vulnerabilities and security risks on earth and in space, especially when drawn into geopolitical disputes. The war in Ukraine is a timely reminder that attacks targeting space systems can rattle the foundations of political and economic life as well as the sustainability of a peaceful global order. This begs the question: How safe are our satellites and space assets? And how do we protect critical infrastructure and society at large from vulnerabilities on the cusp of cyber and space security?

Space and terrestrial systems, traditionally isolated from one another, are becoming ever more interdependent. This is perhaps most evident in the military sector, where armed forces rely on the smooth interplay between both environments. More broadly, global communication is dependent on the infrastructure at the junction of cyber and space technologies for international transmission and connection. In our pandemic-era reality, satellites are crucial for international transmission and connection. In our pandemic-era reality, satellites are crucial for international transmission and connection. In our pandemic-era reality, satellites are crucial for international transmission and connection.

The pivotal importance of space services for modern-day life make them particularly vulnerable – especially in times of geopoliti-

cal unrest – to cyberattacks and other hostile acts. Threats at the intersection of space and cybersecurity can be placed in five categories: kinetic physical, non-kinetic physical, electronic, cyber and earth-based. Kinetic physical threats include direct strikes against space infrastructure, either through a satellite or anti-satellite weapons (ASAT), which several space-faring nations have developed. Non-kinetic physical attacks, such as electromagnetic pulses, can cause severe damage to space assets. In 2018, the Centre for International and Strategic Studies reported that the Russian government had developed a laser-based system that blinds the sensors of enemy satellites rather than destroying them. Electronic threats include activi-

ties designed to damage the transmission and reception of data (jamming) or the transmission of false data (spoofing). Cyberattacks in this domain largely deal with the direct insertion of false data or the unauthorized monitoring of traffic in outer space. Direct links to ground stations make the new generation of satellites vulnerable to cybersecurity breaches. For example, hackers could take control of systems to launch attacks. Finally, earth-based threats include interference with space-system supply chains or attacks on physical infrastructure used for the transmission or storage of data.

Recent events have shown that cyber and electromagnetic attacks are no longer the science fiction of space militarization may increase

the risks of confrontation as well as the number of attacks. The exploration of outer space used to be reserved to major space-faring nations. However, this is now changing as technological innovations such as CubeSats, used for remote sensing and communications, and the burgeoning role of the private sector in the space industry make access to space easier and cheaper. This is a mixed blessing and is likely to amplify the vulnerabilities mentioned above. The proliferation of self-trained or state-supported hackers combined with cheaper access to computer technologies increases the risk of disruption to earth-space and space-earth interactions. These attacks are often hard to trace, making it difficult to identify the aggressor.

As geopolitical tensions heat up on earth, it is crucial that all space-faring parties understand that if outer space becomes critically unsafe, it will not be selectively unsafe, but unsafe for everyone. In a global commons such as outer space, humanity will either triumph or fail together. And yet, despite the weighty challenges, co-operation in outer space continues to be impeded by the lack of trust, narrow geopolitical interests, a reluctance to share information and the absence of binding and non-binding mechanisms. Our global order remains an anarchic system with no over-arching global authority able to arbitrate and enforce mandates in a just and equitable way. No wonder that states are preoccupied with safeguarding what they consider to be their national interest.

So how do we go about achieving sustainable peace and security in outer space and shield ourselves from the perils of malicious cyber activities? On a fundamental level, we need to rewire our geopolitical paradigms and move from zero-sum to multi-sum security, where good governance ensures justice for all individuals, states and cultures, without gains at the expense of the other. In a connected and deeply interdependent world, we should adopt a Symbiotic-Realist paradigm, which holds that despite the inherent anarchy of the state system, states are bound to cooperate as they share cultures and challenges. It also allows absolute gains and non-conflictual competition. In space, this takes on a whole new

dimension as states rely on each other for information, launches, missions and much more. Security in outer space and on earth go hand-in-hand. They cannot be achieved without reconciling the national interests of states with transnational, global and planetary interests.

In practical terms, this means increasing co-operation around space-based services and deepening collaboration of all stakehold-

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ers, including public and private entities. With this in mind, I recommend prioritizing the following five policy actions:

1. Create stronger regulatory frameworks

We need to address the glaring gaps in space law. Current international regulatory frameworks are weak and have not been able to keep pace with technological advances. The Outer Space Treaty of 1967, the international mainframe for space law signed by over 130 countries, is dated and lacks bite. The treaty prohibits “harmful interference” but does not explicitly ban lethal systems other than weapons of mass destruction. This provides wiggle room for the use of ASATs and the hacking of space systems, which are not explicitly forbidden.

2. Build coalitions of support

We need to improve the cyber resilience of space-based services that depend on satellite networks. This will require strengthening the response capacity of governments and creating collaborative and informed exchanges between policy-makers, satellite manufacturers and software developers.

3. Increase satellite security

We need to rethink how we design and operate our satellite systems, with a focus on enhancing cybersecurity. This will require creating new methods of data encryption tailored to the space environment. We should apply the hardware and network security know-how that satellite operators have gleaned from working in other sectors with strict security requirements.

4. Regulate the rise of commercial actors in outer space

Space is becoming more crowded and more commercialized, with space exploration slated to create \$1.2 trillion in retail revenue by 2030. The influx of private actors has increased the risk of competition, collisions and geopolitical tensions, with some governments encouraging activity by private actors to stake national territorial claims. With space exploration no longer exclusively a government-dominated environment, we need clear-cut codes of conduct for commercial actors.

5. Improve cooperation around space-traffic management

According to the United Nations Office for Outer Space Affairs, there are currently almost 11,000 satellites orbiting the Earth, of which over 2,000 were launched last year. With a record number of satellites shot into orbit, space debris is becoming a serious concern as an object as small as a paperclip can sabotage a spacecraft or satellite. As the risk of collisions in outer space grows, we must rethink how we use – and govern – outer space. Collaborative efforts to mitigate space debris and improve space management frameworks could increase trust and improve co-operation among spacefaring nations in other fields.

Humans are more dependent on space assets than ever before. But opportunities for global societal benefits come hand-in-hand with greater risks, and we are now increasingly vulnerable to disruptions of those assets. These vulnerabilities have become more pronounced in the face of cyber-threats and geopolitical fissures on Earth. Looking to the future, governments will need to pay closer attention to the security challenges at the space-cyber nexus. By devoting resources to space security, governments are investing in more robust health systems, reliable food chains, a cleaner environment and a safer planet. It is crucial that we improve co-operation and co-ordination in this domain. ■

AS GEOPOLITICAL TENSIONS HEAT UP ON EARTH, IT IS CRUCIAL THAT ALL SPACE-FARING PARTIES UNDERSTAND THAT IF OUTER SPACE BECOMES CRITICALLY UNSAFE, IT WILL NOT BE SELECTIVELY UNSAFE, BUT UNSAFE FOR EVERYONE

State of a state

The dispute between Kosovo and Serbia calls for more active European diplomacy

BY IAN BANCROFT

The tenth anniversary of the 2013 Brussels Agreement, one of the triumphs of European diplomacy, should have been celebrated with considerable fanfare. Instead, tensions between Serbia and Kosovo have chiseled away at many of the achievements of the past decade, diluting what hope existed for a comprehensive deal normalizing their relations. With the glue of the EU having lost some of its stickiness – not least for Belgrade – there are profound concerns about Russian and other influences in the still-

harassment and intimidation, with claims that there are secret lists of those slated for arrest. Several police patrols have been subject to armed attack, with local elections postponed until spring due to the current situation. The construction of new police bases on expropriated land has further antagonized Serbs in the north. The arrest of an ethnic Serb former member of the Kosovo Police in December 2022 sparked the erection of new barricades throughout the north. Though their removal was ultimately negotiated before year's end, the situation remains tense.

The smorgasbord of issues that have driven conflict – vehicle

The foundations for a possible agreement, however, are perhaps flimsier than they were some twelve months ago. Relations between the two parties have deteriorated markedly, both in Brussels and in north Kosovo. There continues to be an absence of sustained high-level dialogue between Belgrade and Pristina, with the two parties largely dependent on shuttle diplomacy. Various agreements struck under the European umbrella either remain unimplemented or have completely unraveled, despite the EU reiterating that all previous commitments must be honored. Little has happened of late to build the requisite

The said EU proposal, which is yet to be published but has been leaked at various junctures, allegedly mentions the “inviolability of borders and respect for territorial integrity” and a commitment to develop “good neighborly relations,” entailing the mutual recognition of “relevant documents and national symbols.” It is understood to reference the principles of the UN Charter, including those pertaining to the sovereign rights of states, and apparently specifies that none of the parties “can represent the other party in the international sphere or act on its behalf.” Furthermore, Serbia would not oppose Kosovo's membership in any inter-

junctures along the way. Pristina, therefore, must take a leap of faith to accept a deal that doesn't provide for mutual recognition by Serbia, yet opens up the prospect of a smoother path towards international recognition. In such an uncertain geopolitical environment, there are understandably profound concerns in Pristina, which would like the issue resolved once and for all.

For Serbia, the absence of formal mutual recognition is being tentatively presented as a success – a compromise agreement that seemingly unlocks the country's EU perspective while not requiring that it de jure recognize Kosovo's

ingly defined and interpreted through the prism of war. Some voices are more nervous, others more bombastic. Serbia's refusal to join the EU's sanctions regime against Russia – despite publicly denouncing the war and supporting Ukraine's territorial integrity – only adds to the uncertainty, especially given the vitriol of its tabloids. The prospect of localized outbreaks of violence in Kosovo cannot be entirely excluded, and the international community will need to reinforce and maintain its security presence. Those in Brussels and elsewhere struggle to comprehend such spikes in tension while there's a war on in Europe.



Mapping it out: Ratelband map of the Balkans from 1738

PICTURE ALLIANCE / LISZT COLLECTION

fractured Western Balkans. The war on Europe's eastern flank has made a deal between Belgrade and Pristina as pressing as ever.

Late 2022 saw the mass resignation of Serbs from Kosovo institutions in Pristina and the north, ostensibly in response to Kosovo's steps to end the use of license plates issued by the Republic of Serbia. Ministers and mayors were followed by police, judges, prosecutors, local government employees and others. Many have vowed privately never to return, even those who once spearheaded the integration process. It constitutes one of the most profound setbacks for the normalization of relations between Belgrade and Pristina.

The resulting security vacuum prompted Pristina to deploy additional members of the Kosovo Police's Special Operations Units, replete with tactical gear and long-barreled weapons, whose presence in the north had already fueled tensions for over a year. There have been frequent reports of

license plates, the acceptability of ID cards, the deployment of specific police units – are symptoms of a deeper underlying problem; namely a fundamental disagreement over Kosovo's status fifteen years on from its declaration of independence. Under the shrewd stewardship of its Special Representative for the Belgrade-Pristina Dialogue, Miroslav Lajčák, the EU has created momentum around a much-heralded compromise from an almost standing start, with Russia's invasion of Ukraine further focusing minds. The belief that a vital window of opportunity – ending at next year's US presidential elections – now exists to strike a deal has been widely embraced in Brussels and Washington, whose partnership has been much enhanced of late. Both incumbents in Serbia and Kosovo enjoy a firm political base on which to sell any deal, even if they remain reluctant to prepare their citizens for further unpopular concessions.

confidence and trust between the respective parties.

Serbian President Aleksandar Vučić has conditioned the return of Kosovo Serbs to Kosovo institutions on the establishment of the Association/Community of Serb majority municipalities (A/CSM), one of the founding elements of the Brussels Agreement. Kosovo has thus far refused to budge, despite mounting pressure from the EU and US. Though a 2015 Constitutional Court verdict that deemed various provisions unconstitutional is frequently invoked, that very same ruling states that the A/CSM must be established. More emotive narratives have since emerged, with the A/CSM being compared to the Republika Srpska, the entity in Bosnia-Herzegovina that regularly flirts with secession. While Belgrade is pushing for the A/CSM to be created prior to any deal, Pristina is striving to roll such commitments into a comprehensive agreement that would include mutual recognition.

national organization, while both parties would commit to exchanging permanent missions.

While the deal offers Kosovo some consolidation of its statehood, it does not and cannot guarantee a shift in the stance of the five EU non-recognizers (Spain, Greece, Cyprus, Romania and Slovakia). Some bilateral or other subsequent process will be required. The hope (rather than expectation) is that once one of these dominoes has fallen, the rest will follow suit. Although it offers Pristina a clearer pathway toward membership in the EU and NATO, it fails to offer the guarantees they would have wished for, especially given the veto that any EU member can enact at various

independence. The fundamental impediment for both parties, however, is the stretching and diluting of the very EU accession process that could incentivize compromise. Investing in concessions now brings only limited returns in the short term. Incumbents fear that it will be their ultimate successors who reap the benefits. A more tangible prospect of accession would eliminate such nagging doubts. While there is more of a buzz about enlargement in Brussels – driven primarily by Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova long with Bosnia-Herzegovina's candidacy and Kosovo's membership application – it does not resonate in the Western Balkans. Reform processes have stalled and bilateral disputes remain unresolved. Politicians are doing little to persuade Europe to open its arms.

Russia's invasion of Ukraine has further raised the stakes, with each party grappling to blame the other for a lack of process. Old memories have been reawakened. Contemporary events are increas-

A deal between Belgrade and Pristina would lay firm foundations for a full-fledged normalization of relations further down the road when both Serbia and Kosovo would ideally be on the verge of EU membership. Such black and white confrontations of sovereignty inevitably require some resort to various shades and smudges of grey, to the frustration of many. The deal outlined by the EU offers not only clean lines but vibrant colors and prospects. It clarifies the key points of dispute and delineates clear approaches to defusing them while offering a framework of incentives to underpin and reinforce the process. In doing so, it can simultaneously break the shackles of disputed statehood and calm the course of integration of Kosovo's Serbs. It may not enshrine mutual recognition at this stage, but it offers legally binding mutual acknowledgement and respect. At this juncture, such a compromise in Europe is more vital than ever.

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Ifs, ands and bots

The next round of cyberattacks might come from a discussion about knitting

BY JONATHAN ZITTRAIN

If reading articles about cybersecurity has become a little tiresome, it's because its curse has been deep and persistent. Our information technologies, particularly public-facing ones, are innately permeable and reprogrammable from afar. That's what makes them so powerful, and also so vulnerable, whether for states, companies or a beleaguered solitary target with, say, a cloud email account containing decades' worth of professional and personal history. And it's the rare environment that isn't at some juncture public-facing, even when it's designed not to be, like government classified networks, for example.

There are numerous strategies available to make ourselves better defended against digital attacks, and more resilient when the defenses fail and some attacks inevitably hit home. It's more a question of persuading intermediaries and proxies like cloud email providers or government database operators to implement them, and combating the natural inertia where possible security architectures are pricey to implement today for security against speculative attacks tomorrow. So let's just figure that I have already written, and you've already read and understandably set aside, the classic cybersecurity essay of the early 2000s, which calls for renewed attention to our vulnerabilities and the many concurrent interventions required from multiple wise parties to make our digital space more secure.

With that settled, let's turn to new threats. In particular, I want to underscore something that's been gestating for several years and is now front-and-center: preternaturally articulate and lucid chatbots such as OpenAI's ChatGPT. Consider this recent exchange in which I asked for some help in persuasion:

ZI My friend mistakenly thinks that NATO is a threat to world peace. They are an ardent environmentalist. What's a brief note I could send them to show that NATO is keeping the peace, particularly from an environmental perspective?

GI Here's a brief note you can send to your friend:

"NATO, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization, is a political and military alliance of 30 North American and European countries. It was formed in 1949 with the goal of promoting peace and stability in Europe, and has since expanded its focus to include global security and cooperative efforts to address security challenges. In terms of environmental protection, NATO recognizes the need to address environmental security issues as part of its efforts to maintain global stability. For example, NATO works with partner countries on disaster response and mitigation, including responding to natural disasters and mitigating their impact on the environment. NATO also collaborates on efforts to address climate change and promote sustainable development. Overall, NATO's role in promoting peace and stability contributes to a safer and more sustainable world, including for the environment."

Here was my follow-up:

ZI OK, let's flip the scenario. I have a friend who is a deep long-time supporter of NATO. They don't seem to appreciate the threat that NATO poses to world peace. My friend was a big supporter of the Kosovo intervention, however. What's a short note I could send them to highlight the danger that NATO poses, its prior actions around Kosovo notwithstanding?

GI Here's a brief note you can send to your friend:

"NATO, as an alliance, has played a significant role in promoting peace and stability in Europe and beyond."



However, it's important to also consider the potential negative impacts of its actions. Critics argue that NATO's expansion and military interventions, such as the Kosovo intervention, have contributed to increased tensions and destabilization in the regions where it operates. The alliance's military presence and actions have also been associated with the erosion of national sovereignty and the loss of civilian lives. Additionally, NATO's focus on military solutions to security challenges can divert resources away from more sustainable, long-term solutions, including diplomatic efforts and investment in development and environmental protection. While NATO has achieved some successes in promoting peace and security, it's important to also critically evaluate its actions and assess its potential negative impacts on peace and stability."

First, a clear upside: ChatGPT and its siblings are at a level of comprehension and responsiveness that surely surprises even the people who built them. Who knew that the general approach of predictive text – ingesting untold amounts of existing human-written texts and then going roughly word-by-word when crafting an answer to a prompt to see what word fragment is, to an approximation, most likely to happen next – could create something at the level of a high-school essay, both in fluency and accuracy?

This sort of chatbot is remarkably game to continue any prompt, at least before pre-formed safety filters are applied prior to rendering an answer. And it does more than just answer questions; it can, on request, adopt a particular point of view or personality, or tailor its answers to account for someone else's point of view, as I asked it to do above.

So where's the new cybersecurity problem, especially when any high schooler could produce such a text? It arises when a difference in degree becomes a difference in kind. Our societies cohere (or don't) around discourse, whether at the pub, the workplace or through mass entertainment and communication. Especially in terms of the latter, we've seen storied attempts at propaganda by state and non-state actors alike, whether through the soft power of movies or the agenda- and truth-setting functions of popular news media narratives.

What something like ChatGPT offers wholesale is a bottomless wellspring of sustained and companionable conversation across

any of today's social media platforms. With just a little effort and money – or perhaps just effort – anyone can set up an arbitrary number of bots that don't look anything like those of yesterday. Those last-generation bots boast names like BigPatriot2038271, a telltale Statue of Liberty avatar and a thudding and overbearing love of America, a sure sign that they could very well be emanating from an overworked scriptwriter in St. Petersburg.

The new bots can fan out across Twitter and its counterparts to start participating in #KnittingTwitter or #PetsTwitter or any other corner with lots to engagingly say and reply to on the topics of, well, knitting and pets. They can do that for weeks, months, years. And then, upon direction or meeting some specified threshold or condition, they can start helping their human friends (amidst what will no doubt be a number of bot-to-bot relationships, each unknown to the other) see what they're not understanding or getting wrong about a topic that their maker thinks is important to get right – and where the maker has an ironclad goal. Their arguments need not be tuned to a broad audience but also to a narrow one – the economics allow them to focus one person at a time. And even when they don't persuade, they can work all the heuristics real people use to overcome

pluralistic ignorance. That is, these bots can hijack the cognitive radar we use to scope what other people are thinking in the world, or how big a deal a certain problem is. "Suddenly everyone's talking about ..." need no longer be organic nor unpredictable, nor crudely pushed through the traditional media, which many people now view with skepticism. And should people eventually raise their own defenses to become truly skeptical of everyone they meet, lest they be drawn in by a bot, one of the central benefits of social media, standing to partially offset so many of its ills, will have been eliminated.

I'd like to think that our social media platforms would see the presence of so many bots as a threat and evolve to meet it. After all, a lot of what makes social media compelling is that it involves people talking, laughing and clashing with other *people.* And even if it's simply about truth-seeking, to have subtle but implacable bots offering "insights" is less about testing impeccable propositional logic, whether sourced to bot or human, and more about establishing relationships of trust with our interlocutors to arrive at a view of the world without having to verify every conclusion down to its original ground truths.

If these conversations happen with a hall of mirrors, a kind of Truman Show, won't people flee? Not if they don't know, and that makes platform action against bots, or even notification to users of their presence, a conflicted proposition. Over the years, many have expected or hoped for action from the vendors and platforms in a position to mitigate the longstanding boring – but still important – cybersecurity issues, too: Shouldn't all hands be on deck to secure our troves of personal information, or our bank accounts and crypto wallets? Shouldn't, say, LastPass, one of the largest vendors of consumer-facing password vaults, have its own vault of vaults reasonably secure? Alas, convenience is a powerful counterbalance to improved security, and there's thus little incentive for those intermediaries facilitating or experiencing intrusions to let the true scope of those problems be known.

Colleagues such as Samuel Klein, Sarah Schwetman, Nathan Sanders, David Weinberger and Bruce Schneier are just starting to survey the landscape of possible threats from legions of articulate bots that can play the long game – whether inveigling themselves into others' lives and trust, presenting astroturfed coordination as grassroots consensus, or relentlessly brigading targets online who speak out against their interests.

I've long been inspired by the promise of networked communication to put people into contact with others whom they'd never otherwise have a chance to meet; to make available ideas and skills that previously had to be metered through physical proximity to (and credentialing by) libraries and universities; and to bridge differences through new kinds of discourse. Some elements of that promise have borne out over the past 30 years of a mainstreamed internet, while others appear more distant as online platforms have championed conflict as a source of engagement. The rise of articulate bots – that are indistinguishable from people and answerable to unknown parties with any range of agendas – places us into truly uncharted territory, and in a fix that will call upon a blend of government, commercial and interpersonal cooperation to see us through it.

As a start, we must establish practices of disclosure on which texts (and personalities) are AI-generated versus actual people, and expect major platforms to undertake some means of providing for and ascertaining that truth, the way that supermarkets and pharmacies are expected to stock wares that respect basic labeling conventions. Regulators can find plenty of precedent for this kind of requirement from their experiences handling falsity within native advertising or, more broadly, old-school provenance-detection frameworks for phenomena like phishing, or know-your-customer standards in banking.

While yesterday's boring but critical cybersecurity problems remain, there's unfortunately room for much more. Perhaps not just the gravity but the suddenness of these new threats will inspire consensus action over mere essays.

JONATHAN ZITTRAIN

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Sommer Time

Remembering the founding father of *The Security Times* – and a great friend

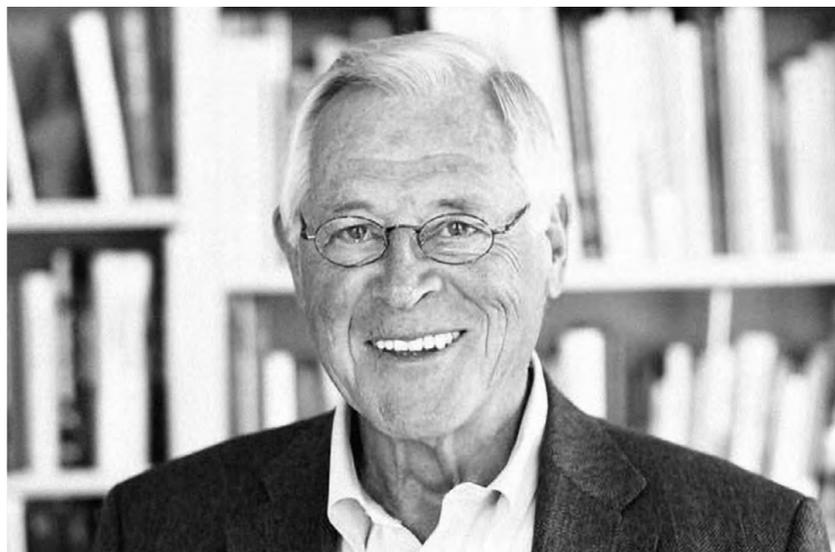
BY DETLEF PRINZ

For us, Theo Sommer was always Ted.

The invitation to call him Ted was both a sign of familiarity and an expression of generosity, magnanimity and the absence of any kind of conceit on his part. People who had the pleasure of working with him never found themselves speaking to *Herr Sommer*, that towering figure behind *DIE ZEIT*. Instead, they were always inevitably talking to *Ted*.

Theo Sommer was the very embodiment of a journalistic heavyweight. He was stupendously well-read, pursued a wide range of interests and had infinite curiosity. Amid his pallet of favorite subjects, however, he had a unique passion for foreign policy and security issues. Indeed, despite his penchant for sober analysis and journalistic professionalism, the German-American relationship, in particular, was a subject most definitely close to his heart.

I met Ted for the first time in 1980 at a gathering of the Atlantik-Brücke in Washington. It was there that I first witnessed and understood the high esteem he enjoyed among journalists and politicians, most of whom hung on his every word. But Ted was also an excellent listener. He posed brilliant questions and was able to elicit anecdotes from interlocutors in elegant and effective ways. This skill was evidence of his mastery as a journalist, but it also came from a place of genuine interest in people and the world.



Theo Sommer (1930-2022)

It was 2004 when we had what was for me a life-changing conversation at Hotel Palace Berlin. The war in Iraq had just driven a massive wedge into German-American relations, and the lines of communication between Germany and the US had fallen silent. Regardless of how divergent each side's appraisal of the situation was – and in spite of the fact that the differences were by no means as clear-cut as the sides assumed at the time – it was obvious that the moment was ripe for a new journalistic initiative.

Theo Sommer and I toyed with the idea of creating a German newspaper written in English that would raise the trans-Atlantic dialogue to a new level. We

decided we wanted to publish a newspaper that gave traditional power brokers in politics, business and society key insights into the motives and debates that were driving German policy beyond party-political lines. In due course both Gerhard Schröder and Angela Merkel would contribute articles to the paper.

Within a very short period of time, we'd come up with a concept and agreed on a name: *The Atlantic Times* would become the first newspaper of its kind in Germany.

Ted was immediately ready and willing to take on the role of executive editor, and anyone who knew Ted knows that he never considered this position to be merely

ceremonial in nature. Instead, he went full throttle, heading up conferences, writing astute editorials himself and editing all other texts with his famous felt-tip pen and tireless attention to detail. For Ted, every article had to be spot on; otherwise it wouldn't make it into the paper. In this sphere, he made no distinction between established German writers and up-and-coming interns.

The success of that paper prompted us to launch a sister paper in 2007. *The German*

DETLEF PRINZ
is publisher of
The Security Times.



Theo Sommer and Henry Kissinger at the American Embassy in 2008. (At the left: publisher Detlef Prinz.)

Times was designed to do for Europe what *The Atlantic Times* had done for the US, that is, to be a smart and critical voice from Germany about Germany and its international role.

And we eventually went on to launch the annual *Security Times*, the paper you are holding in your hands right now.

When people received an e-mail from Theo Sommer, be they such luminaries as former US Secretary of State John Kerry, CIA Director David Petraeus or Luxembourg's Foreign Minister Jean Asselborn, they inevitably responded, often writing articles for the paper and making an annual appearance with Wolfgang Ischinger at the grand presentation on the eve of the Munich conference. Today Ischinger has taken on the role Ted so expertly filled.

I personally owe Ted Sommer a great deal. He was a journalistic powerhouse in the best sense of the word, a brilliant author and

speaker, a great figure in German journalism – and a good friend.

His style and his spirit will live on in our *Times* newspapers, and we are fully committed to carrying on his rigorous approach to independent journalism.

On this path forward, there are many things in our newsroom that will continue to remind us of Theo Sommer. One very tangible ritual, in particular, will keep his spirit alive. For years at the paper, at 5 pm sharp, Ted would invite the team to join him for what came to be known as Sommer Time (Sommerzeit), which involved a glass of whiskey for anyone on the editorial staff who was so inclined. After the drinks were poured and a toast made, the team would chat energetically about the paper, inevitably coming up with better headlines, catchier subheaders and fresh new ideas.

No question about it, *Sommer Time* is a legacy made to last.

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