UNITED FRONTS: EXPLORING THE RANGE AND IMPACT OF US MILITARY ASSISTANCE TO UKRAINE IN 2022

Summary. This article analyses of the extensive international military assistance from the USA extended to Ukraine during the Russian invasion. Focused on understanding the significance and effectiveness of this aid, the study explores the various forms, motives, and challenges faced by Ukraine. The article highlights the unprecedented financial, humanitarian, and military support from more than 50 countries, including the United States. The study emphasizes the pivotal role of this assistance in Ukraine's defence, enabling the nation to halt the aggressor's offensive and launch a successful counter-offensive. The article also discusses the importance of maintaining Ukraine's democratic image for sustained international support and emphasizes the significance of long-term cooperation with global defence coalitions.

The full-scale invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation on 24 February 2022 was a stage of the Russian-Ukrainian war, which Russia launched on 20 February 2014. According to some estimates, this conflict is currently Europe's most significant armed conflict since World War II.

Due to Ukraine's unpreparedness for such a war, significant economic and infrastructural losses due to Russia's aggression, the scale and high intensity of hostilities, and without financial and military assistance from Western partners, Ukraine would not have been able to stop the aggressor's offensive. That is why one of the crucial tasks for researchers at this stage is to record and study the forms, methods, motives, and problems of international military assistance to Ukraine from leading democratic states.

In his programme article, the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces of Ukraine, Valeriy Zaluzhnyi, clearly states that the material basis of Ukrainian resistance and the key to Ukraine's victory is partner countries' significant military and technical assistance. [1] It should be emphasised that the level of aid to Ukraine from the civilised world was unprecedented and provided in the military, humanitarian, and financial spheres.

According to estimates by the Centre for Economic Strategies (Ukraine), from 24 February to 14 December 2022, the Ukrainian budget received $28.1 billion in financial assistance from international partners. [2] According to the Prime Minister of Ukraine, Dmytro Shmyhal, in 2022, Ukraine attracted $31.2 billion in support from international partners. These are primarily funds from the United States of America (USA), the European Union (EU), and the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Of these, 45% are grants.

More than 50 countries have provided financial, humanitarian and military assistance to Ukraine. Humanitarian and financial support to Ukraine has been supplied by more than 30 foreign business giants (Airbnb, Netflix, PayPal, Tesla Inc.), as well as several international organisations, e.g. EU, IMF, United Nations (UN), World Bank (WB) etc.

In 2022, the United States remained Ukraine's largest donor of international financial, humanitarian and military assistance. Thus, as of 7 June 2022, out of €85 billion in total commitments to help Ukraine, the USA allocated €42.7 billion, or 50% of the total obligations. [5]

It should be noted that, according to researchers from the Ukraine Support Tracker project of the Kiel Institute for the World Economy, since 4 October 2022, the EU has, for the first time,
outstripped the USA in terms of total aid to Ukraine. Thus, as of 20 November 2022, EU countries and institutions declared almost €52 billion in military, financial and humanitarian aid. For comparison, the commitments made by the United States at that time were just under €48 billion.

At the same time, this calculation by researchers from the Kiel Institute for the World Economy could not take into account the US military aid packages to Ukraine provided during December 2022 - early January 2023 (9 December 2022 - $275 million [7], 21 December 2022 - $1.85 billion [8], 6 January 2023 - $3.075 billion [9]). It is also known that the US budget 2023, signed at the end of December 2022, provides at least $45 billion to help Ukraine. [10] From the beginning of Russia's unprovoked and brutal invasion on 24 February 2022 to 6 January 2023, the United States has spent at least $3.75 billion on aid to Ukraine. The United States has allocated $24.2 billion for security assistance to Ukraine. [11] US military assistance to Ukraine in 2022 is $21.9 billion. [12] At the same time, the United States remains the most prominent foreign donor to the Ukrainian budget. [13]

US military assistance is provided in three main formats with varying degrees of efficiency: a) the Lend-Lease Act; b) long-term assistance under the Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI); c) the operational programme of "withdrawals" from the US Department of Defence stockpiles under the Presidential Decision Authority (PDA) for free transfer to Ukraine. Currently, the United States prioritises those security assistance formats to Ukraine that do not require us to repay the funds later (unlike the Lend-Lease). The current US assistance (other than the lend-lease) is provided within the framework of individual programmes and assistance packages approved by US Congress, totalling more than $40 billion. [14]

a) The Ukraine Democracy Defence Lend-Lease Act of 2022 is an act of the United States Congress, which, like the Lend-Lease Act of World War II, is the US response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. The first deliveries of arms and military equipment under the US Lend-Lease Act for Ukraine began in October-November 2022 [15].

b) Ukraine Security Assistance Initiative (USAI), announced on 24 August 2022. Its total amount is about $3 billion [16], equal to three annual budgets of the Ministry of Defence of Ukraine for purchasing all weapons and military equipment in 2021.

c) Operational assistance under the US Department of Defence's Presidential Drawdown Assistance (PDA) programme. During the fiscal year (from August 2021 to August 2022), the Biden administration used this presidential authority 19 times to provide military assistance to Ukraine, totalling more than $8.01 billion. Of this amount, $7.75 billion was provided after 24 February 2022 [17]. On 6 January 2023, the 29th package of such assistance was provided.

The formats mentioned above are the main ones but do not exhaust Ukraine's security cooperation with the United States. Other important cooperation and assistance coordination formats include the so-called "Ramstein Air Base meeting". This is a regular meeting of the permanent international Ukraine Defence Consultative Group, initiated by the United States, which takes place every month (online or in person) to coordinate urgent military assistance to Ukraine. Observers compare the creation of an international defence coalition in the Ramstein format to the Tehran Conference of 1943, where the Anti-Hitler Coalition during World War II was finally formed. [18]

The last meeting of the Ukraine Defence Consultative Group in 2022 occurred at the end of November 2022. Another format is "Copenhagen" (the Conference of Northern European Allies in Copenhagen, #CopenhagenUkraine). [19] This format, launched on 11 August 2022 by the defence ministers of 26 countries, raised €1.5 billion for military assistance to Ukraine at its first meeting. [20] Unlike the Ramstein format, which provides urgent assistance, the Copenhagen format is distinguished by its long-term projects. [21] The Copenhagen meetings are an extension of the International Fund for Ukraine (IFU), established in April 2022 to coordinate the procurement and transportation of military equipment from third countries or industries.

Another assistance format is the United States European Command (EUCOM) Control
Center Ukraine (ECCU). The US Department of Defence established it in the area of responsibility of the US European Command in Germany (based at the US European Military Command headquarters at the US military base "Patch Barracks" in Stuttgart, Germany). The ECCU is a crucial international hub in Europe, where the bulk of the work on supplying Ukraine with military equipment occurs. [22]

The Ukrainian Armed Forces effectively used the foreign military assistance provided. Thanks to the high level of operational and strategic skills of the Ukrainian Armed Forces command, the courage of Ukrainian soldiers and Western weapons, the Armed Forces not only held back the aggressor's advance but also launched a successful counter-offensive in early September on the Kharkiv and Kherson directions. The Western press notes that equipped with a growing arsenal of long-range Western weapons, Ukraine was able to strike at Russian troops deep in the rear, disrupting critical supply lines and increasingly hitting targets of crucial importance to Russia's combat capabilities. [23]

As a consequence of confidence in Ukraine and its Armed Forces, this year has seen a change in the dynamics and the context of foreign military assistance, including from the United States. While at the beginning of the war, Ukraine's Western allies sent mainly small arms, ammunition, anti-tank and anti-aircraft missiles, now it is heavy weapons such as artillery, multiple launch rocket systems, and air defence systems, including Patriot missile systems.

The rhetoric and actions of not only such consistent partners of Ukraine as the United States, Britain or Poland but also countries that are more moderate in their support for our country are also changing significantly. The change in Germany's position is significant. [24] Russia's invasion of Ukraine has led to a fundamental paradigm shift in the EU's approach to financing lethal military equipment. For the first time, the European Union is financing the purchase of lethal weapons for a third country at war.

**Conclusion.** The duration of the war in Ukraine, and therefore the scale of potential negative consequences for the Ukrainian and global economy from this war, depends on the size and effectiveness of Western assistance to Ukraine, primarily on three interdependent main factors: a) the pace and scale of supply of highly effective offensive weapons to Ukraine; b) the pace of their mastery by the Ukrainian military; c) the ability to effectively use them in actual combat conditions and demonstrate visible success in countering the enemy.

The need for a prompt supply of weapons for the final defeat of the aggressor at the front is undeniable. At the same time, to further prevent threats without a peak, it is necessary to focus on the long-term perspective: a) Ukraine's membership in NATO, which will be the actual record of Ukraine's victory. After all, preventing Ukraine's accession to NATO was one of the critical goals of Russia's large-scale invasion of Ukraine; b) expanding the global coalition in support of Ukraine in the format of the Ukraine Defence Contact Group (Ramshackle). This initiative currently unites more than 50 partners. However, everything is learned in comparison: The Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS, which the United States created in 2014, includes 80 countries and four international regional organisations. [25] The expansion of such a coalition is essential not only because of the possibility of Ukraine receiving military assistance but also because it will help to create new effective mechanisms and structures for responding to international security challenges in the future.

In this context, maintaining the image of Ukraine as a democratic state governed by the rule of law remains essential for further financial and military support for Ukraine and its European and Euro-Atlantic integration. In this regard, the cases of top-level corruption in times of war, attempts at politically motivated persecution of the pro-European opposition, and restrictions on freedom of speech, which are not requirements or consequences of the martial law regime imposed in Ukraine, are harmful to Ukraine's democratic image.

The latest NATO summit and the new formats of cooperation, Ramstein and Copenhagen, give reason to hope that Ukraine will eventually receive the number of weapons necessary to turn
the tide in this war in its favour and thus ensure victory on the battlefield and the end of the war on terms favourable to our country and the international coalition supporting it.

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