

Trump and the Russo-Ukrainian War

By Armando Simón

Many persons have dismissed Trump's claim that he can end the Russo-Ukrainian War in 24 hours. Trump was vague about the details, and he was almost certainly exaggerating about the speed, which is characteristic of him since he is a salesman, though he always comes through with his promises.



Pres. Trump meets with France's Macron and Ukraine's Zelensky in Paris (The Times and the Sunday Times Youtube)

Trump does not buy into the anti-Putin propaganda that Putin is trying to conquer Europe or the world. This is the traditional song that is bandied about to justify entering into armed hostilities (in this case, the EU against Russia). Admittedly, Putin does have a Sudetenland mentality and has wailed about Russians living abroad in "hostile" countries. He would also like to see Belarus and Ukraine reabsorbed into Mother Russia (just prior to invading Ukraine, he gave a rambling historical [lecture](#) on why in his mind Ukraine is an artificially created state that should not exist). However, both countries have made it clear that it's just not [going](#) to happen. Putin was even deluded into thinking that Ukrainians would welcome the Russians with open arms. By now, he has

turned the page on that dream. He is, after all, a realist (for one thing, the lack of Chinese support opened his eyes).

There has been a lot of propaganda from both sides (or by proxy) that one side or the other is running out of manpower, and that each side is playing for time—Europe and America will get tired of supporting Ukraine and will get distracted by the next shiny object, or conversely, that Putin will be overthrown because of the meatgrinder the war has become or his whole army will defect. Additionally, pro-Russia propaganda has focused within America in pointing out corruption in Ukraine (something Zelensky was attempting to eradicate) and supposed Nazis in the country and armed forces. Propaganda within eastern Europe has additionally focused on imagined persecution by Ukrainians of Romanian and Polish enclaves inside Ukraine.

The deal that Trump would probably propose is going to be a logical one, and it would be one where both parties can claim victory, thereby saving face.

First, there would be a ceasefire while negotiations take place.

Second, Trump would demand that both sides return to their original borders. If Russia does not agree, America could take the leash off and European troops can participate in the war *strictly within Ukraine*, beginning in the spring (“Cry havoc! And let loose the dogs of war!”), but America will not get involved. Since Russia has recruited troops from other countries to help out in the war (North Korea, Cuba, etc.), he will point out what is good for the goose is good for the gander. Putin is well aware that if his troops have not smashed the Ukrainians by now, it certainly cannot resist the combined forces of Europe. The same goes for a nuclear threat, which empty threat gets raised every other week. If Russia cannot defeat Ukraine what makes anyone think it can defeat the rest of Europe combined?

Third, although Ukrainians would legitimately demand that kidnapped Ukrainian children and POWs be exchanged, it could not make any other demands (such as reparations to help rebuild the extensive damage). Russia, in turn, might even shamelessly demand reparations for those tanks destroyed by Ukraine.

Fourth, and this is the key, Ukraine cannot join NATO, nor the EU, but will remain a buffer state. This will be guaranteed by a *formal treaty* instead of the verbal assurances that were given to Russia a decade ago that [NATO](#) would not expand eastwards, said assurances having been broken and made Russian paranoia hit the roof. This treaty will also include a guarantee of Ukrainian independence. The trick of stationing NATO forces, including missiles, in Ukraine without formally joining the organizations would be an obvious violation of the treaty. A clause in the treaty outright stating that any violation of the treaty would result in nonnuclear conflict.

Thusly, Ukraine could boast of having retained its independence, that it beat back the mighty Russian army, though it would regret not having membership in the EU or NATO. On the other hand, Russia could boast of having taught Ukraine a lesson and of having achieved the original goal of arresting NATO expansion. Just as important for Russia, it will cease being a pariah politically and economically.

Hopefully, this would also result in the end the two decade old, secret tug of war that has been waged internally through proxies by the EU and Russia for the country to join one side or the other.

Russia will try hardest to retain Donbass and the Crimea for one extremely important reason. Those regions are rich in natural gas and gas has become a powerful weapon in Russia's aim of disrupting unity in Europe. If Ukraine also acquires those gas fields, then a potential weapon would be lost, not to mention the income therefrom.

We shall see what happens.

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