

RUSSIAN-UKRAINIAN WAR: DEVELOPMENTS AND PROSPECTS

Summary of the Analytical report
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The analytical report covers the period from September 2022 to January 2023 and carries summarised assessments of the situation and conclusions from that period.

With its aggression upon Ukraine and ultimatum-like demands on NATO and the West in general, Russia has once again demonstrated its historic aggressiveness against the USA, Europe, and democracy as such. It views the export of corruption, selective granting of temporary preferences on its market, enhancement of the dependence of the European countries on Russian resources, strong anti-Western propaganda as mechanisms of weakening and splitting the Western unity.

The success of the Ukrainian defence forces on the front, demonstration of the invincible spirit of Ukrainian society, strong official and popular diplomacy of Ukraine in the Western countries have strongly influenced the attitude of the Western politicians to the developments in Ukraine and the nature of military, technical and humanitarian assistance from the Western partners. Such assistance became one of the main factors of Ukraine's durability in its war with Russia.

After several setbacks of the Russian troops the situation on the front in January 2023 stabilised, fighting goes on with varied success, but both sides are preparing for more resolute actions. In such conditions, the main factors that will determine the balance of powers include the availability of resources and sources for their replenishment, the ability to plan and use them on the battlefield, training, motivation and holding power of personnel. The sides compete not only in the strength and

quality of manpower and materiel but also in the rate of their accumulation.

Russia still has and uses its numerical superiority over Ukraine and hopes for a success of an offensive campaign, probably planned for the end of winter – beginning of spring, 2023, or transition to a «war of attrition».

In a war with a state that despises the international law and *en masse* resorts to terrorism against civilians, it is important to be ready for big human losses and ruination of critical, including civilian, infrastructure. Protection of the population and infrastructure – first of all, energy infrastructure – is indispensable for preservation of durability of the state and society.

In case of the Russian aggression on Ukraine (and afterwards, possibly, on NATO member states) the war may become protracted, which will require the availability and concentration of huge resources and reserves, their readiness for prompt employment in defence forces' operations. This requires: flexible production capacities and their chains; ability of rapid manoeuvre of forces, resources, reserves; creation of a coalition of partners ready to provide assistance; testing of the channels and mechanisms of such assistance.

The success of the fight with Russia strongly depends on the coincidence of the positions of Ukraine and the Western partners about the

options of the war end. In this respect, growing assistance to Ukraine in the Ramstein format, foreign training programmes for the AFU personnel, Western sanctions against Russia give grounds for optimistic forecasts of the war end.

Despite positive changes in assistance to Ukraine and pressure on Russia, Western politicians do not stop discussing the subject of negotiations with Putin. This not only undermines the Western unity, limits assistance to Ukraine for «curbing» the international aggressor and terrorist, but also gives the Kremlin hope to escape the defeat, strengthens its feeling of impunity and encourages it to be even more aggressive.

In its turn, Ukraine — its Armed Forces, Government and society alike — is strongly and

invariably determined to win a military victory and liberate all the occupied territories. The main condition for this is to preserve the unity of the Western partners, their military and technical assistance to Ukraine of the required types, in the required volumes and at the required pace.

Minimal security guarantees for Ukraine include its full victory over Russia, its deprivation or minimisation of the ability to pursue an aggressive policy, strengthening of its defence potential and NATO membership. This position is shared by ever more NATO member states, and not only on the Russian borders. They realise that the war in Ukraine goes on also for the sake of peace in Europe. Ukraine's victory and disappearance of Russia from the list of existential threats will for a long time ensure the Western unity.

